

The
RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY
of
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

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by
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PREFACE

Recent years have witnessed a revival of interest in Coleridge, the man and his work. The man himself has occasioned such psychological studies as Fausset's Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charpentier's The Sublime Somnambulist, and Potter's Coleridge and S.T.C. A glimpse into his work from the standpoint of literature has been afforded by the brilliant study of Lowes in The Road to Xanadu, and more recently by Richards in Coleridge on Imagination. Coleridge's creative work in philosophy has been reviewed by Miss Snyder in her Coleridge on Logic and Learning, by Muirhead in his Coleridge as Philosopher, and by Wellek in his Immanuel Kant in England - to mention only works in English. Finally, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Coleridge's death, there appeared a memorial volume containing studies by several hands.

There is to be noted, however, one significant lack among all these recent studies. With the exception of a short section in Dr. Muirhead's book, no study of Coleridge's religious philosophy has appeared. Nor is this all. In the main, where the recent critics have touched on Coleridge's religious beliefs, they have done so with little sympathy for his profession of Christian faith. There has been a tendency to treat it either as secondary in importance, or to explain it as

an expression of the "superficial" rather than of the "true" Coleridge; but, as a recent reviewer has pointed out,¹ Coleridge's Christian faith cannot be set aside so easily. Coleridge was a philosopher with a love of speculative truth. He was also a sincere Christian. His attempt to combine the two may have ended in failure; but no analysis which ignores or eliminates the one or the other can be said to be true to his thought.

The following study, undertaken at the suggestion of Professor H.R.Mackintosh, is an attempt to remedy this two-fold defect in Coleridgean criticism. It aims at an adequate exposition of Coleridge's religious philosophy. The chief sources of that philosophy, and the influences that determined the development of Coleridge's mind, are discussed first. The main body of the thesis is then devoted to the exposition of his views. While the emphasis is expository, certain points of criticism are indicated.

It is to be noted that this thesis does not claim to be exhaustive on all phases of Coleridge's religious thought. Coleridge was the most learned man of his age, and the roots of his reading and thought go deep into every field of human knowledge. A detailed, exhaustive study of the whole range of his mind in this field is impossible within the limits of this thesis. For example, Coleridge's ethical theory, although closely allied to his religious philosophy,

1. The Times Literary Supplement, August 9, 1934, p.551.

is not dealt with separately. It is felt, in the first place, that Muirhead treats of this adequately; and secondly, that sufficient is said of the "self" in connection with Coleridge's epistemology and doctrine of immortality, and of society in connection with his theory of Church and State, to show the trend of his thought on ethical problems, namely that the man makes the motives and not the motives the man, and that ethics must be based ultimately on religion. Again, the writer does not propose to discuss Coleridge's relation to such movements as Quakerism and Swedenborgianism, nor to analyze his indebtedness to each of the thinkers with whom and with whose writings he was acquainted.

In view of the importance of certain manuscript remains, it has been found necessary to quote from them at length. This method, while adding somewhat to the length of the study, is not without advantage. It enables Coleridge to speak for himself.

A word is necessary with regard to the spelling. In accordance with the fashion of the age, Coleridge uses capitals lavishly. In quotation, Coleridge's system of spelling has been retained, but not elsewhere. Again, certain words are spelled differently in different places, e.g., judgment and judgement. With the exception of certain additions and changes in punctuation, the passages quoted from the manuscript remains are as they stand.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his debt of appreciation; first, to the Reverend G.H.B. Coleridge, vicar of

Leatherhead, Surrey, and great-grandson of S.T.Coleridge, for the extended use of the manuscripts in his possession; second, to the Henry E. Huntingdon Library of San Marino, California, for permission to consult the manuscript in its keeping; and third, to Professor Alice D. Snyder of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, for the use of her photostat copy of the Huntingdon Manuscript. In addition, he desires to express his thanks to Dr. Hunter of the New College Library, Edinburgh, and to the librarians of the University Library and of the National Library, Edinburgh, of the British Museum and of Dr. Williams' Library, London, and of McGill University, Montreal, for their especial assistance.

Finally, he wishes to record his deep gratitude to his advisors, Professor H.R.Mackintosh and Professor Hugh Watt, for their assistance and gracious encouragment during his period of study in Edinburgh.

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CHAPTER I

Coleridge in Relation to the Thought of his Time.

"The exact day on which a man is born is a matter of no importance:" writes Dr. Carnegie Simpson, "the important thing is a man's period."¹ Regarded from this viewpoint, it may be said that Samuel Taylor Coleridge was singularly fortunate. Born in 1772, his "period" is the transition period from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century. The transition which then took place has been described as representing "one of the most profound spiritual transformations which human thought has undergone."² In that brief period at the turn of the century, the clamping shackles of the eighteenth century on the whole spirit of man were destined to be overthrown. It was an age of great events - and great men. And, as is always the case with great men, they were playing in the dual role of creature and creator. The eighteenth century left a legacy - and Coleridge was a beneficiary. It left also a

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1. Carnegie Simpson: The Life of Principal Rainy, I, p.39.
2. Storr: The Development of English Theology, p.44.

problem - to the solution of which he was to devote the major part of his life.

What then was this legacy of the eighteenth century? It was a century which had made articulate its mind in the formal poetry of Pope and Dryden, and in the philosophy of Locke. A sensationalist psychology and a firm belief in undeviating natural law dominated the world of thought. Thought and religion, it is true, were in close alliance, but this alliance meant that religion was watered-down to "common sense." Religion was regarded as a conservative bulwark of morality; and morality was construed in the utilitarian spirit of Paley. Anything in the nature of personal enthusiasm was frowned upon as a deviation from the orderly walk of life. Proud in its self-complacency, Deism had exiled God gracefully but firmly from the universe, and man was sure that the control of things was safely in his own hands. But withal, the spirit of man was hedged in everywhere by petty rules of his own making. It was the age of the finite.

"What was highest in it," says Dr. Muirhead concisely, "the impulse to pass beyond itself and enter, through knowledge, feeling and action, into union with what is greater and more enduring than itself, was everywhere checked by the view which the prevalent principles seemed to be forcing upon it. Instead of spiritualizing nature, philosophy had naturalized spirit."¹

But as the century drew to a close, new forces were already in motion to break down this house of man's building. Geographical horizons were enlarging, as adventurers and traders brought news of new lands beyond the seas. The

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1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.26.

researches of historians were uncovering the wealth of fact and thought lying buried in the caverns of the past. No longer was a static view of human nature tenable.¹ The protest against cold rationalism was heard as feeling found her voice. In Thomson and Cowper were heard the first notes which were to swell into the full chorus of the Romantic Revival. Man, himself, emerged with a new dignity beneath the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, and the poetry of Burns and Wordsworth. The ferment of ideas arising out of the revolutionary thought of Rousseau, with the ensuing revolution in France, and the rise of democracy in America, turned thought along a new channel - towards the idea of government, not by agreement, but by the corporate will of the nation. To these factors must be added the new discoveries of science which led directly to the Industrial Revolution with its resultant wealth and resultant social problem. All this was true of England. On the Continent, moreover, the edifice of the Aufklärung had begun to totter as the foundations of a new philosophy of idealism were being laid by Kant and his successors, Fichte and Schelling; and of a new theology by Schleiermacher.

In all this welter of movements and ideas, was there not some underlying unity? Romanticism was bringing back the sense of the Infinite as the chief value in human life. History was giving man the perspective of the years, and science

1. Storr: op.cit., p.40, regards this growing feeling for history as the most important factor.

had begun to view things in their inter-relations. Philosophy had analyzed man into his component parts. Could it now rebuild him into a unity at once dynamic and creative? Could it rebuild the universe into a universe of purpose? Man was finding a new kinship with man. Could he find a new kinship with the Soul of the universe? This dual problem - the intellectual problem of integrating all the lines of man's experience and thought, and the practical one of discovering to man a spiritual home in the enlarged universe - was the one demanding answer. What was needed was not only a philosophy and a religion, but a synthesis that would be at once both a philosophy and a religion. Perhaps more than any other man of his age, Coleridge saw the problem - saw it, because he found localized within his own person the factors of the problem.¹ As a recent writer has said, he was "one of the few men of his generation who really grasped the significance of the great intellectual and social metamorphosis which the Western world was undergoing."²

Throughout long years Coleridge sought his goal, his pace now slowed with the dead weight of depression and sickness, now quickened under the stimulus of friendship and the

1. Vide Muirhead: op. cit., p.30; and Coleridge: Studies by Several Hands on the Hundredth Anniversary of His Death, pp.183-189.

Cf. Aynard: La Vie d'un Poete, p.355, who takes the opposite view that Coleridge was so dominated by the past that he failed to grasp the significance of the changes going on around him. How far wrong Aynard is, will be seen by reading Muirhead and Cobban.

2. Cobban: Edmund Burke and the Revolt against the Eighteenth Century, p.176.

inspiration of some author. At the end he had prepared vast stores of material and even outlines had been sketched.¹

Recent criticism has inclined to acknowledge a larger measure of success,² than a former age accredited to him, in his self-imposed task of bringing within the bounds of one system all human knowledge and experience.

Even his severest critics have never questioned the capacity of his mind. Perhaps his greatest service was that of inspirer. His was a seminal mind. As early as 1840, Mill, by no means in agreement philosophically with Coleridge, wrote, "Bentham excepted, no Englishman of recent date has left his impress so deeply on the opinions and mental tendencies of those among us who attempt to enlighten their practice by philosophical meditation."³ Writing of his age, Mill says further, "No one has contributed more to shape the opinions of those among its younger men, who can be said to have opinions at all." In a dual capacity as interpreter of the German transcendentalists and rediscoverer of the native British Platonist philosophy, Coleridge became the founder of nineteenth-century British idealism.⁴

Even more fruitful, perhaps, has been Coleridge's influence within more strictly theological circles. Principal Tulloch writes of Coleridge's influence, as that of "a new power."⁵

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1. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic and Learning, pp. 3-8.
 2. Vide Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.15 and passim.
Vide Snyder: op. cit., vii and passim.
 3. Mill: London and Westminster Review, March 1840, Reprinted in Dissertations and Discussions, Vol. 1, p.393.
 4. Vide Muirhead: op. cit., p.59 and passim.
 5. Tulloch: Movements of Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century, p.7.

Archdeacon Storr ranks Coleridge and Newman as the two greatest personalities of the early nineteenth century in theology, but adds significantly, "Newman was a somewhat lonely being, the course of whose later life moves outside the Anglican tradition."¹ The springs of later Christian Socialism in England are to be found in Coleridge,² while Hare, Maurice, Kingsley, and men of the Broad Church School have each left their personal tribute to him. In America, Coleridge's writings received even a warmer welcome.³ To President Marsh of Vermont and to Horace Bushnell, Coleridge came as a ray of heavenly light. The influence of Coleridge is clearly seen in the developed thought of Bushnell. What were the views that had such widespread influence? An answer to this question requires first some account of their author.

1. Storr: op. cit., pp.6-7.

2. (Vide Schanck: Die Socialpolitischen Anschauungen Coleridges und sein Einfluss auf Carlyle.

Brunner: S.T.C. als Vorlauffer der Christlich-Socialen Englische Studien, 1921-55, pp.46-52.

3. Vide Coleridge: Studies by Several Hands etc., pp.201-221.

CHAPTER II

The Development of Coleridge's Mind.

The pathetic story of Coleridge's life has been told many times. Coleridge wore his heart on his sleeve, and his biographers have found ready to hand sufficient material for their varying opinions of his character and habits.¹ It is not necessary to enter into all the details of his life for a complete understanding of his views. What is required, however, is a sketch of his life which reveals the nature of his mind and the factors which went to influence it during its growth to maturity.

I. "The born Platonist."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in the little Devonshire village of Ottery St. Mary on October 21, 1772, the youngest child of a family of thirteen. His father, the Reverend John Coleridge (1719-1781) was the eccentric vicar of the Parish of Ottery St. Mary and Master of the Free Grammar School in Ottery. In a saying which has achieved some notoriety, Coleridge

1. Vide: Fausset: Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
Charpentier: The Sublime Somnambulist.
Potter: Coleridge and S.T.C.

once maintained that "every man is born an Aristotelian, or a Platonist." ¹ In the widest sense of the term, he himself was born a Platonist. The Bible was his first textbook, and at the age of three, he "could read a chapter." ² Protected as the youngest child by his mother, he found his greatest pleasure, not in physical play, but in reading. Robinson Crusoe and the Arabian Nights were early favourites. Of his voracious reading of imaginative literature, he wrote,

"I know no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. Those who have been led to the same truths step by step, through the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess. They contemplate nothing but parts, and all parts are necessarily little. And the universe to them is but a mass of little things." ³

He described himself accurately in later life, "My mind," he wrote, "has been habituated to the Vast, and I never regarded my senses in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by sight, even at that age." ⁴ He became a dreamer.

"I was driven," he says, "from life in motion to life in thought and sensation.....Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child's habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child." ⁵

On the death of his father in 1781, the precocious boy was sent to Christ's Hospital School through the kindness of friends. Here he stayed for eight years, studying under

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1. Table Talk, July 2, 1830, p. 99.
 2. Turnbull: Biographia Epistolaris, p. 9.
 3. Ibid: pp. 17,18.
 4. Ibid: p. 17.
 5. Ibid: p. 15.

the severe eye of Bowyer, and acquiring Charles Lamb for his friend. His reading continued as his chief pleasure. His interest in philosophical and theological discussion early manifested itself. "At a very premature age, even before my fifteenth year," he writes, "I had bewildered myself in metaphysics, and in theological controversy."¹ The neo-Platonic poems of Synesius were the subject of an early attempt at translation.² A reading of Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary caused him to "sport Infidel" for a period, but as he said himself, "my infidel vanity never touched my heart."³ His alleged atheism drew forth a flogging from the head-master, Bowyer, "the only just flogging" he ever received.⁴ His love of exposition of the theories and speculations discovered in his reading, was here given its first impetus towards that development which was to make him the "Seer of Highgate," "rich in monologue," at the close of his life. The delightful picture given by Lamb of his friend, "expounding the mysteries of Iamblichus and Plotinus,"⁵ may be somewhat overdrawn. Nevertheless, it reveals this fact - Coleridge was by nature and by destiny a preacher.⁶

II. Cambridge and Bristol - "Necessitarian and Unitarian."

In 1791, Coleridge entered Jesus College, Cambridge; but left in 1794 without taking his degree. It was during this

1. Biographia Literaria: p. 7

2. Ibid: p. 121n.

3. Gillman: Life of S.T. Coleridge, p. 23.
Cf. Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p. 69.

4. Gillman: op. cit., p. 24.
Cf. Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p. 69.

5. Lamb: Essays of Elia, "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago," pp. 27-28.

6. Cf. Potter: Coleridge and S.T.C. pp. 94-96.

period of his Cambridge studies that Coleridge's intellectual development began in earnest. He entered Cambridge an orthodox Anglican, a member of the Established Church, with a view to taking orders.¹ He left it a necessitarian in philosophy, and a Unitarian in theology. His friendship with Southey dates from the period of his first vacation, a friendship which was to lead him into the turmoil of the pantisocratic scheme, and into a marriage which was to prove so utterly uncongenial. To his early university days is to be dated his first meddling with opium.² His first year at Cambridge gave promise of classical attainments.³ His real interests, however, were in other fields. Classical learning, for Coleridge, could never be an end in itself.

It is to be noted that at this period a revival of interest in Platonism was being stimulated through the publications of Thomas Taylor. It is therefore probable⁴ that at this time Coleridge made the acquaintance of the Cambridge Platonists, to whose writings he was forever indebted.⁵

Another attraction was to claim the attention of the ardent young scholar. Coleridge was a student in the college of David Hartley.⁶ Hartley was not only a philosopher, he was

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1. Turnbull: op. cit., Vol. II, p. 301 - Letter of March 1833.
 2. Griggs: Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Vol. I, p. 3.
 3. He was selected as a Craven Scholarship candidate.
 4. A search by the writer through the reading registers of Jesus College, October 30, 1934, failed to reveal Coleridge's name as borrower. At any rate, it is certain that by May, 1795, Coleridge was reading Cudworth. (Kaufman: Modern Philology, XXI, p. 3.)
 5. Vide Howard: Coleridge's Idealism and passim.
 6. David Hartley (1705-1751) Author of Observations on Man.

sincerely religious - holding Unitarian beliefs. Hartley's logical consistency appealed to Coleridge's mind. Moreover, Hartley's Unitarianism offered a solution to the moral difficulties which Coleridge felt in contemporary orthodox theology. Unable at this period of his life to question the validity of Hartley's premises, and stimulated by the society of Frend,¹ Coleridge joyously gave Hartley his allegiance. His native Platonism was for the time driven underground. His allegiance was marked. In 1794, he described him in his Religious Musings as

"he of mortal kind
 Wisest, he first who marked the ideal tribes
 Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain." ²

Religious Musings is significant. It indicates the trend of his thinking in this formative period. The title of this first major poem indicates that already religion was the dominating interest in his life. His theology is thoroughly Unitarian. Priestley ³ follows Hartley in the poem as "patriot, saint and sage." ⁴ Gingerich rightly observes, "The principles of Unity and Necessity fairly jostle each other in rivalry for the first place in the reader's attention." ⁵ In 1794, Coleridge wrote to Southey, "I am a complete necessitarian, and I understand the subject as well almost as Hartley himself, but I go

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1. William Frend (1757-1841) Mathematician and Reformer. Expelled from Cambridge in 1793, for radical views in politics and religion.
 2. The Poems of Coleridge: p. 123.
 3. Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) Chemist and Unitarian theologian.
 4. Poems, p. 123.
 5. Gingerich: From Necessity to Transcendentalism in Coleridge, (Publications of the Modern Language Association of America Vol. XXXV, p. 4.)

farther than Hartley, and believe the corporeality of thought, namely, that it is motion." ¹ In 1796, Coleridge's adherence was still to Hartley. He bestowed on his first son the name of David Hartley. So much for necessity.

In a letter to Thelwall, dated December 17, 1796, Coleridge wrote,

"Now the religion which Christ taught is simply, first, that there is an omnipresent Father of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, in whom we all of us move and have our being; and, secondly, that when we appear to men to die we do not utterly perish, but after this life shall continue to enjoy or suffer the consequences and natural effects of the habits we have formed here, whether good or evil. This is the Christian religion, and all of the Christian religion." ²

Here, then, is the other pole of unity. There is no hint of the orthodox doctrine of sin. God is love. Coleridge is a convinced optimist. With these twin conceptions of unity and necessity, Coleridge felt that he had a living message for his age, and in 1795, he undertook with enthusiasm a series of religious lectures in Bristol at the age of twenty-three. ³

His reading at this time shows a wide range of interest. Not only so, but it reveals the seed-ground of later discord. The Platonist, Cudworth, stands side by side with the materialist Hartley; the orthodox Jeremy Taylor alongside the Unitarian, Priestly. Works of Paley and Berkeley also may be noted in the varied list of poetry, theology, philosophy and history. ⁴ In the letter to Thelwall already mentioned, Coleridge

1. E.H. Coleridge: Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Vol. I. p. 113.

2. Ibid: Vol. I, p.199.

3. Cottle: Early Recollections I. pp. 27-28., Vide Appendix A.

4. Kaufman: Modern Philology, XXI, 3, pp. 317-320.

speaks of Taylor "the English pagan" as among his "darling studies." This was Thomas Taylor of Cambridge. In the postscript to the letter Coleridge commissioned Thelwall to purchase for him a number of neo-Platonic works. Iamblichus, Proclus, Porphyrius, Julian and Plotinus are named. It is significant that Thelwall executed his commission.¹ At this period then, neo-Platonism was exerting a considerable influence on Coleridge's thought. Lowes, indeed, remarks on the neo-Platonic elements in "The Ancient Mariner."² Beneath the calm surface of his Unitarian determinism, deep was calling unto deep.

On October 4, 1794, Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, and settled at Clevedon, near Bristol. Marriage and the break-up of the pantisocratic dream, forced upon Coleridge the realities of life, and in 1796 he started a weekly journal, The Watchman, with the motto, "That ye all might know the truth and that the truth may make you free." In his capacity as editor, Coleridge revealed himself as a Christian socialist.³ After 10 numbers The Watchman failed, on May 13.

On frequent occasions Coleridge appeared in a Unitarian pulpit as a volunteer preacher. His political sermons in Mr. Jardine's Chapel at Bath were disappointing; but Hazlitt has left on record that Coleridge could at times preach with power and eloquence.⁴ For a period after the failure of The Watchman Coleridge seriously considered becoming a regular

1. Letters, Vol. I, p.182 and note.

2. Lowes: The Road to Xanadu, pp.229-241.

3. Vide E.H. Coleridge in Coleridge: Studies by several hands etc., p.12.

4. The Liberal, II, #3, 1823, pp.25-26.

Unitarian minister. However, a life less regular in its demands was more to the poet's liking, and the promise of an annuity of £150 from the Wedgwood Brothers was sufficient to obviate this possibility. ¹

In 1796 Coleridge settled at Nether Stowey, and his acquaintance with Wordsworth, who was at Alfoxden, began. The results of this meeting with Wordsworth are historic. In 1798 appeared The Lyrical Ballads, marking a new era in the realm of literature. ²

Coleridge was now at the height of his poetic power. The poems of this period reflect not only a more humanized, but a simplified, religious outlook. The poems of 1797-98 are born of personal experience rather than of abstract speculation. Religion is still paramount; but is not so obtrusive. Unity and necessity still find expression in his verse. In the greatest poem of his life, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Gingerich tells us that Coleridge has given "in a rarefied, etherialized form the exhalations and aroma of his personal experience of Necessity and Unity, 'the blossom and fragranc[y]' of all his earlier religious meditations." ³ Gingerich points out that the religious motive in Coleridge's poems gradually becomes less prominent, until in Christabel it has disappeared entirely;

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1. Griggs: Coleridge and the Wedgwood Annuity, (Review of English Studies. Vol. VI #21, Jan. 1930.)
 2. Vide Knight: Coleridge and Wordsworth in the West Country.
 3. Gingerich: From Necessity to Transcendentalism in Coleridge, (Publ. Mod. Lang. Ass. of A. Vol. XXXV, 1, p. 19.)

and argues on this basis that "in this direction, then, the evolution of Coleridge's mind has gone as far as possible." He adds significantly that "those who suppose that if his poetical powers had remained unimpaired Coleridge would have continued writing Ancient Mariners and Christabels imagine a vain thing."¹ This opinion must be endorsed. A crisis, deep-rooted and gradual in development, had occurred in his spiritual make-up.

Before considering the causes which precipitated this crisis, it will be well to keep in mind other details of his life. Simultaneously with the production of his marvellous verse, under the expansive influence of Wordsworth and his sister, Coleridge was devoting his "thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals."² His passion was philosophy and religion.³ Early in 1796, on the failure of The Watchman, Coleridge was outlining a plan of education, starting with man as an animal, and rising through man as an intellectual being, to its climax of man as a religious being. Coleridge proposed to discuss "the ancient metaphysics, the system of Locke and Hartley - of the Scotch philosophers - and the new Kantian system." In the section on religion he proposed to include "an historic summary of all religions and the arguments for and against natural and revealed religion."⁴ This letter to Poole is of interest as marking Coleridge's first mention of Kant.

op.cit.,

1. Gingerich: Vol. XXXV, 1, p. 28.
2. Biographia Literaria: p. 95.
3. Cf. Coleridge: Studies by Several Hands etc., p.23.
4. Turnbull: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 78,79. Letter to Poole, May 6, 1796.

The journey to Germany, which he proposed also in this letter was not to take place, however, for some years.

Meanwhile Hartley's influence was giving place to that of Berkeley, in honour of whom Coleridge named his second child, born May 14, 1798.¹ His transfer of loyalty to Berkeley, if transfer it may be called, was of no great significance philosophically, when one recalls that Berkeley, himself, underwent a change from his earlier empiricism, to his later idealism. It was to the earlier Berkeley that Coleridge gave his allegiance. Coleridge, then, was still under the influence of the Lockean tradition.

His close intercourse with Wordsworth is of more than historic literary interest. His observation of his friend's divine faculty was paralleled² by the welling-up of his own creative springs. Here was not only a new thing in poetry - a fact to be observed - it demanded new thought.² Now it was that he found himself all afloat. He had "successively studied in the schools of Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Hartley;"³ but now doubts rushed in, and broke upon him. "The fontal truths of natural religion and the books of Revelation alike contributed to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat and rested."⁴ This Ararat he found in

1. Turnbull: op. cit., Vol.I, p. 162.

2. Shawcross: Introduction to Biographia Literaria, p. xxii. Shawcross points out that, if Coleridge's memory is to be trusted, the problem had begun to shape itself eighteen months before he met Wordsworth. It took the form of the distinction between fancy and imagination. (Biog. Lit., p. 42.)

3. Biographia Literaria: p.66.

4. Ibid, p. 95.

Spinoza. "For a very long time indeed," he says, "I could not reconcile personality with infinity; and my head was with Spinoza, though my whole heart remained with Paul and John."¹ The Ararat thus proved but a temporary resting-place. Crabb Robinson quotes Coleridge as saying in 1812, with reference to Spinoza, "This book is a gospel to me," adding later, "His philosophy is nevertheless false."² And in 1825, Coleridge still felt that the pantheism of Spinoza was better than the "modern Deism, which is but the hypocrisy of materialism."³ The intellectual love of an impersonal deity, however, could never satisfy one with Coleridge's insight. Spinoza's starting-point was wrong. His error, Coleridge notes, consisted

"not so much in what he affirms, as in what he has omitted to affirm or rather denied:..... that he saw God in the ground only and exclusively, in his Might alone and his essential Wisdom, and not likewise in his moral, intellectual, existential, and personal Godhead."⁴

Before he had yet read Kant's Critique of Pure Reason Coleridge tells us that he became convinced that religion could not be "wholly independent of the will," and "must have a moral origin."⁵ Although he still remained a zealous Unitarian with respect to revealed religion, he had swung sufficiently to consider the idea of the Trinity, "a fair scholastic inference from the being of God as a creative

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1. Biographia Literaria: p.95.
 2. Robinson: Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence. Vol.I, pp. 399-401.
 3. Ibid: Vol. II, p. 297.
 4. British Museum MS., Egerton 2801, Folio I. (Watermark 1817).
 5. Biographia Literaria: p.96.

intelligence."¹ It had, however, no "practical or moral bearing."² What was needed, he says, was "a more thorough revolution in my philosophic principles, and a deeper insight into my own heart."³

The years immediately ahead were to see that revolution take place, and that deeper insight obtained. From the throes of mental and spiritual turmoil Coleridge emerged, chastened in spirit, and with his philosophy set definitely in the transcendentalist channel.

III. The Spiritual Revolution.

In Dejection: An Ode, written in April 1802,⁴ Coleridge describes how his "shaping spirit of imagination" has failed him, and his creative joy has fled. Henceforth, he is resolved

"to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man -
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul."⁵

This loss of creative power has been attributed to various causes. Literary critics largely have followed Wordsworth in fixing the blame on his metaphysical studies. Wordsworth held that if Coleridge had not gone to Germany, "he would have been the greatest, the most abiding poet of his

1. Biographia Literaria: p. 97.
2. Ibid: p. 98.
3. Ibid: p. 98.
4. Dejection: An Ode, Poems: pp.362-68.
5. Ibid: p.367.

age."¹ But Coleridge was a metaphysician before he went to Germany, and Gingerich is more nearly correct when he writes of a "strong, natural tendency in Coleridge toward the abstract,"² and that "in the long run his original natural impulse to abstraction was stronger in him than the impulse to concrete poetical representation."³

This may account for the decline in Coleridge's poetic productivity. It does not of itself account for the loss of inner joy. Muirhead⁴ follows De Quincey in attributing the cause to opium, to which Coleridge was addicted. De Quincey was of the opinion that it "killed Coleridge as a poet. 'The harp of Quantock' was silenced forever by the torment of opium."⁵ De Quincey continues to claim that Coleridge's metaphysical instincts were "stung by misery" into "more spasmodic life." The adjective spasmodic draws attention to that trait in his character for which Coleridge has been censured severely - his apparent inability to bring his projected works to completion. Of this, De Quincey wrote that "all opium-eaters are tainted with the infirmity of leaving works unfinished."⁶ Be this as it may, De Quincey is undoubtedly right in saying that "poetry can flourish only in the atmosphere of happiness."⁷ This

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1. Wordsworth: Prose Works III, p. 469.
 2. Gingerich: From Necessity to Transcendentalism in Coleridge, (Publ.Mod. Lang. Ass. of A. Vol. XXXV,1, p.26.)
 3. Ibid: p. 27.
 4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p. 44.
 5. De Quincey: Works, Vol. XI, p. 105.
 6. Ibid: Vol. XI, p. 107.
 7. Ibid: p. 106.

judgment is supported by Coleridge himself. "When a man is unhappy he writes damned bad poetry, I find," he wrote distractedly to Southey.¹ His unerring psychological insight into the workings of his own nature goes straight to the heart of the problem.

Unfortunately Le Quincey's bias prevented him from doing justice to all the facts. In attributing Coleridge's unhappiness solely to opium he and his followers have failed to take account of the deeper and more subtle factors involved.

Coleridge found himself unhappy in his marriage. In a letter to Southey, dated October 21, 1801,² Coleridge first refers to his domestic unhappiness. Such a declaration to Southey indicates a long period of tension. Sensitive to a degree, his creative powers withered under the blight of this spiritual discord. Born for love, his soul could not live in an atmosphere where love was denied him. He craved fellowship. Lack of spiritual harmony brought dejection as its inevitable consequence.³ Moreover, there is discernible in his character an element of instability. This trait is revealed in his Cambridge days. No one knew better than Coleridge the joy-sapping qualities of an indecisive will. Underlying this, and contributory in no small measure to it, was his physical condition.

1. Letters, Vol. I, p. 92.

2. Unpublished Letters, Vol. I, pp. 182-183.

3. In drawing attention to this domestic discord, it is not necessary to discuss here the causes underlying it. It may be observed, however, that his domestic problem was not made easier by his growing regard for Sarah Hutchinson. Vide Raysor: Coleridge and Asra, (Studies in Philology, XXVI, p. 3. July 1929). Raysor hints at the thwarting of his love for Sarah Hutchinson as the immediate occasion of Dejection: An Ode.

Never robust, an early all-night exposure undermined his health, and led to rheumatic fever and a serious heart ailment. Sickness and pain dogged him throughout his life - furnishing the cause and occasion of his opium-habit.¹

With all these factors in mind, therefore, it is not to be wondered that Coleridge could write as he did:-

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear - ²

The beauties of nature could no longer arouse him.

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.³

Dejection: An Ode, from which these lines are taken, marks a milestone in Coleridge's spiritual pilgrimage. Its importance cannot be overestimated.⁴

From this point until his final settlement at Highgate in 1816 Coleridge "wandered rudderless." A brief respite was afforded him in the friendly home of the Wordsworths at Grasmere. Coleridge's spiritual depression found temporary

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1. Vide Watson: Coleridge at Highgate. pp. 19-40.
Cf. The Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: p. 297.
 2. Dejection: An Ode, Poems: p. 364. (1802)
 3. Ibid: p. 365.
 4. Cf. Gingerich: From Necessity to Transcendentalism in Coleridge, (Publ. Mod. Lang. Ass. of A. Vol. XXXV, 1, p. 30.)
Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p. 45, where Muirhead mistakingly quotes the poem To William Wordsworth, written 1807.

alleviation.¹ He was thus able to project and carry into publication his famous Journal, The Friend.² Upon the cessation of The Friend Coleridge sank further into the morass of spiritual depression. A quarrel with Wordsworth, arising out of his opium habit, cut him adrift from his one sure anchorage.³ In 1814, Coleridge reached the depth of despair over his addiction to opium,⁴ and determined to place himself under medical supervision. "I have learned," Coleridge wrote during this year, "what a sin is, against an infinite imperishable being, such as is the soul of man!"⁵

"Conceive," he wrote to Wade, "a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven, from which his crimes exclude him!..... In the one crime of OPIUM, what crime have I not made myself guilty of!

- Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors -
 injustice! and unnatural cruelty to my poor children!
 - self-contempt for my repeated promise - breach, nay, too often, actual falsehood!"⁶

To Cottle, Coleridge wrote that he had had "more than a glimpse of what is meant by death and outer darkness, and the worm that dieth not."⁷

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1. Raysor: Studies in Philology, XXVI, 3. July 1929. Points to the presence of Sarah Hutchinson in the house.
 2. The Friend proved too cumbersome to be popular and after 28 numbers, dating from June 1, 1809 to March 15, 1810, it ceased publication.
 3. Turnbull: op. cit., II, pp. 66-73.
 4. Ibid: pp. 116-139.
 5. Letters, II, p.619. May 27, 1814.
 6. Letters, II, pp.623-4. Letter of June 26, 1814. It was in this letter that Coleridge gave instructions "that a full and unqualified narration" of his "wretchedness" should be made public, that "some little good may be effected by the direful example." Acting on the strength of this, Cottle published the letter, thus precipitating the whole controversy over Coleridge's use of opium.
 7. Letters, II, p.619.

Recourse to prayer was a natural instinct of his soul. His own testimony is that no spiritual effort appeared to benefit him so much as the one prayer repeated, often for hours, "I believe! Lord, help my unbelief! Give me faith.....faith in my Redeemer."¹ The fatal drug had Coleridge's body thoroughly enslaved. His spirit never ceased to protest against this slavery.

With his settlement with the Gillman's at Highgate in 1816, came a gradual return to better health and a happier spiritual condition. The 'Nightmare Life-in-Death' slipped away and his days were spent in peace. But the scar remained. "Oh!" he wrote in 1830, "That in the outset of life I could have felt as well as known the consequences of Sin and error, before their tyranny had commenced."² The prayers written in his daybook towards the close of his life reveal his sense of need of a God "that heareth prayer," and who forgives sins.

Of the part played by Coleridge's own experience in the shaping of his final philosophy too little has been made. This deep and tragic experience is the background against which the more purely intellectual influences must be considered.

IV. The Philosophical and Theological Revolution.

Pari passu with this descent into the sloughs of spiritual despondency went a steady advance towards the heights of a theistic philosophy. Nor is it to be forgotten that during

1. Letters, II, p. 620. Letter of May 27, 1814.

2. MS. C. p.143. Entry of January 7, 1830.

the time when his soul travelled

"Alone on a wide, wide sea,"

his mental acumen continued at a high level. Even of the darkest hour it can be said that his work shows "no diminution of intellectual, but rather sustained mental vigour."¹ How that mental vigour was stimulated and enriched by his studies is the question awaiting answer.

In the early autumn of 1798 the trip to Germany, proposed earlier, took place. Coleridge had as travelling companions William and Dorothy Wordsworth.² The creative days of Quantock were, however, behind them. The trip had a different meaning to the two poets. This difference is brought out strikingly by Herford. "For Coleridge," he writes, "the German tour was a pilgrimage; for the Wordsworths it was simply a change of latitude."³ From Ratzeburg, where he went first, Coleridge moved on to Göttingen. From February 12, 1799, he was a student at the university, attending Blumenbach's lectures on physiology and pursuing his studies in German literature, particularly Lessing. An introduction to New Testament criticism was afforded him by a fellow-student's notes on Eichhorn's lectures;⁴ but there is no evidence that he attended Bouterwek's lectures on Kant.⁵

In view of this the question immediately emerges - did Coleridge study any German philosophy during this period

1. Turnbull: op. cit., II, p. 136.

2. Vide the account given in Satyrane's Letters and Chapter X of the Biographia Literaria. Biog. Lit. pp.98-101, 238-273.

3. Herford: The Age of Wordsworth, p.153.

4. Biographia Literaria. p.99.

5. Cf. Charpentier: op.cit. p.185.

of residence in Germany? The evidence is somewhat confusing. On the one hand, it is difficult to think of Coleridge, with his natural metaphysical bent, missing the opportunity afforded him of first-hand study of German philosophy and especially of Kant, in whom he had already shown an interest.¹

In support of this strong presupposition is the story related by a fellow-student - years later, it is true - of Coleridge's amusement at a young German lady thinking him incapable of understanding Kant.² In addition, in a copy of Kant's Logic, Coleridge himself wrote later that he had purchased in Germany in 1799 a thin octavo "under the name of Kant's Logic." This book he claims to have lost.³ Nidecker, however, points out that no book bearing this title appeared before 1800.⁴ Coleridge's memory is certainly at fault here. It is highly probable that Coleridge did purchase some of Kant's works while in Germany and that these were included in the "thirty pounds worth of books," mentioned in May, 1799.⁵

On the other hand, there is no reference to Kant in his writing of this period, nor does the partial list of his reading at Göttingen reveal any interest in the Kantian philosophy.⁶ Moreover, the letters written on his return to England

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1. Letters: I, p.203. Letter of December 17, 1796 - at this time he had regarded Mendelssohn as the most profound German philosopher, with the possible exception of "the most unintelligible Immanuel Kant."
 2. Carlyon: Early Years and Late Reflections, I, p.162.
 3. British Museum Copy. note; printed Nidecker: Revue de littérature comparée, VII, p.136.
 4. Ibid: p.136.
 5. Turnbull: op.cit., I, p.181. Letter of May 21, 1799.
 6. Snyder: Books Borrowed by Coleridge from the Library of the University of Göttingen, 1799. (Modern Philology Vol. XXV, p.3; February 1928.)
Cf. Nidecker: Revue de littérature comparée, VII, p.132.

are, to Leslie Stephen at least, sufficient proof that Coleridge up to 1801 had read very little of Kant.¹ Nor is any help afforded by the notes penned by Coleridge on his first perusal of Kant.² Unfortunately, these notes are undated.

In the light of this apparently conflicting evidence, it is not surprising that the critics have reached different conclusions. Muirhead, noting the difficulty of the question, does not venture an opinion;³ but Charpentier is emphatic that Coleridge never got beyond Leibnitz and Lessing, and that he "seemed never to have caught an echo of the revolution taking place in men's minds."⁴ Wellek, on the other hand, takes the view that Coleridge began at Gottingen a preliminary reading of Kant, although the deeper study was postponed until his return to England.⁵ This conclusion of Wellek, we feel, is close to the truth.

In July, 1799, Coleridge returned to England, fortified for the deeper study of metaphysics by "thirty pounds worth of books," and with his mind already contemplating his

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1. Letters: p. 35ln.
 2. Kritik der reinen Vernunft: Ottery St. Mary Marginalia I. Printed Nidecker: Revue de litterature comparée, VII, pp.529-530.
 3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.50.
 4. Charpentier: op.cit., pp.186-187.
 5. Wellek: Immanuel Kant in England, p.69. Wellek makes however, a mistake in citing as evidence of Coleridge's reading of Kant in Germany the account in Satyrane's Letters of the visit to Klopstock. It was Wordsworth, not Coleridge, who discussed with Klopstock the philosophy and influence of Kant. Coleridge was not present at the time, but made use of Wordsworth's notes for the purpose of the Letters. The notes are printed in Knight: Life of William Wordsworth, I, pp.171-177.
Cf. Shawcross: Biographia Literaria, II, pp.175-179.

Magnum Opus.¹ In July, 1800, after a period of brilliant journalism with the Morning Post,² Coleridge settled at Keswick for a close study of metaphysical and religious questions. The crisis was at hand.

In September, 1800, Coleridge wrote to Godwin declaring that his mind had "been busied with speculations."³ The question Coleridge asks Godwin in this letter, "Is Logic the Essence of thinking?" has as its immediate context the relation of language to thought, but it indicates the trend of his thinking. Throughout the winter Coleridge continued his study, which included a reading of Plato.⁴ In December and January he was occupied, among other things, with Kant's idea of space.⁵ On February 13th, 1801, he wrote to Poole that he had been reading and meditating over Locke, Descartes, Hobbes, Leibnitz and Kant.⁶ On March 16th, 1801, he wrote again to Poole,

"If I do not greatly delude myself, I have not only completely extricated the notions of time and space, but have overthrown the doctrine of association, as taught by Hartley, and with it all the irreligious metaphysics of modern infidels - especially the doctrine of necessity."⁷

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1. Turnbull: op.cit., I, p.181, Letter of May 21, 1799.
For a list of the more important references to the Magnum Opus, vide Snyder: Coleridge on Logic and Learning, p.8 note; vide also Unpublished Letters, II, p.464.
 2. Vide Essays on His Own Times.
 3. Unpublished Letters, I, p.155.
 4. Letters, I, p.406.
 5. Anima Poetae: p.12. Note of Dec. 1800 or Jan. 1801.
 6. Unpublished Letters: I, pp. 172-173. N.B. This letter and the notebook entry provide sufficient answer to Leslie Stephen's remark regarding the absence of Kant in Coleridge's reading.
Cf. Letters: I, p.351n.
 7. Letters: I, p.348.

A week later he wrote to Poole that "deep thinking is attainable only by a man of deep feeling, and that all truth is a species of revelation."¹ Newton, Coleridge argues,

"was a mere materialist. Mind, in his system, is always passive, - a lazy Looker-on on an external world. If the mind be not passive, if it be indeed made in God's Image, and that, too, in the sublimest sense, the Image of the Creator, there is ground for suspicion that any system built on the passiveness of the mind must be false, as a system."²

Some months previous, while in Germany, Coleridge had given the first hint of the impending change in philosophical attitude. In a poem written on May 17th, 1799, while he was still in the Hartz forest he wrote:-

"For I had found
That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the Life within; - 3

That towards which Coleridge had been working through the imaginative intuition of his poetic nature, had now become, in the light of his deeper study, a matter of philosophical necessity. As the language of these letters shows, there was also a deep religious interest at stake in the whole matter. Coleridge came to see the conflict of principles involved in the clash between a philosophy of materialism and the fact of a creative poetic spirit and the inconsistency between the logic of necessity and the needs of the human spirit, religious at its deepest level. The seeds of discord sown in his Bristol reading had begun to sprout, and in late February or early March, 1801, they bore fruit. With this denunciation of materialism, Coleridge may be said to be embarked

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1. Letters: I, pp.351-352.
 2. Ibid. I. p.352.
 3. Poems: pp.315-316.

fully on his career as a transcendentalist, and as a theistic philosopher.

The first result of the new outlook was the abandonment of his Unitarian views. A letter to George Coleridge of July 1, 1801, reveals Coleridge's mind.

"I have read carefully," he states, "the original of the New Testament, and have convinced myself that the Socinian and Arian hypotheses are utterly untenable; but what to put in their places I found nowhere distinctly revealed that I should dare to impose my opinion as an article of Faith on others:"¹

Coleridge had by now broken definitely with Unitarianism.

"My Faith," he adds, "is simply this - that there is an original corruption in our nature, from which and from the consequences of which, we may be redeemed by Christ - not, as the Socinians say, by his pure morals, or excellent example merely - but in a mysterious manner as an effect of his Crucifixion. And this I believe, not because I understand it; but because I feel that it is not only suitable to, but needful for my nature, and because I find it clearly revealed. Whatever the New Testament says I believe - according to my best judgement of the meaning of the sacred writer. Thus I have stated to you the whole of the change, which has taken place in me."²

The blithe optimism which had previously ignored sin had now given place, under the demands of his own personal needs, to a more realistic view of human nature. By 1802 the subjects which interested him, in the depths of his nature, were "the Hebrew and Christian Theology, and the Theology of Plato."³ His Christian Platonism was once more in the ascendant.

V. The German Influence.

It remains to examine more closely the nature of Coleridge's study during this critical period of reconstruction.

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1. Unpublished Letters: I, pp.202.
 2. Ibid: I, pp.202-203.
 3. Letters: I, p.406. September 10, 1802.

Bearing in mind constantly the deep poetic and religious nature of the man, it is, at the same time, necessary to consider also the direct philosophic influences at work within the seething ferment of his mind. It is at once apparent that the part played by Kant and his fellow transcendentalists is of supreme importance. To argue with Howard that Coleridge's mind would have developed very much as it did had he never read German philosophy¹ is to take a superficial view of the matter. That the Cambridge Platonists - Cudworth, Whichcote and More - exercised a tremendous influence on his thought is undoubtedly true, but the Kantian stamp is apparent in all his later writings. It was into the Kantian mould that the Platonist content was poured.

Writing some fifteen years later² in the Biographia Literaria, Coleridge relates how Kant's writings took possession of him "as with a giant's hand."

"The writings of the illustrious sage of Königsberg, the founder of the Critical Philosophy, more than any other work, at once invigorated and disciplined my understanding. The originality, the depth, and the compression of the thoughts; the novelty and subtlety, yet solidity and importance, of the distinctions; the adamant chain of the logic; and I will venture to add.....the clearness and evidence of the Critique of the Pure Reason; of the Judgment; of the Metaphysical Elements of Natural Philosophy, and of his Religion within the bounds of Pure Reason, took possession of me as with a giant's hand."³

This passage in the Biographia Literaria makes it certain that it was this reading of the "world-shattering" Kant that drew aside the curtain and discovered to Coleridge the new

1. Howard: Coleridge's Idealism, p.24.

2. In February and March 1801, Coleridge studied Kant deeply.
Vide supra, p.28.

3. Biographia Literaria, p.70.

players of reason and understanding on the stage of his mind. That other hands had set the stage is also certain. Plato and Plotinus, Proclus and Gemistius Pletho, Giordano Bruno, Jacob Behmen, De Thoyras, George Fox, and William Law have their places over against Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, Hartley, Condillac, Hume,¹ Descartes and Hobbes.² With regard to the mystics, Coleridge wrote that their writings "acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the heart in the head."³

From Kant, Coleridge moved on to Fichte. He read Fichte in 1801.⁴ Fichte not only added the keystone to the idealistic arch, he gave the first mortal blow to Coleridge's Spinozism by "commencing with an act, instead of a thing or substance."⁵ But Fichte's philosophy, to Coleridge's mind,

"degenerated into a crude egoismus, a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to Nature, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy: while his religion consisted in the assumption of a mere ordo ordinans, which we were permitted exoterice to call God; and his ethics in an ascetic, and almost monkish, mortification of the natural passions and desires."⁶

Elsewhere, Coleridge writes in similar vein.

"Fichte in his moral system is but a caricature of Kant's, or rather, he is a Zeno, with the cowl, rope, and sackcloth of a Carthusian monk. His metaphysics have gone by; but he hath merit of having prepared the ground for, and laid the first stone of, the dynamic philosophy by the substitution of Act for Thing."⁷

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1. Biographia Literaria. pp.66-70.
 2. Unpublished Letters, I, pp.172-173. Letter to Poole, February 13, 1801.
 3. Biographia Literaria, pp.69-70.
 4. Unpublished Letters, I, p.183, Letter to Southey, October 21, 1801.
 5. Biographia Literaria, p.71.
 6. Ibid: p.72.
 7. Letters, II, p.682. Dec. 13, 1817.

And so he passed to Schelling, attributing to him, "the completion, and the most important victories" of the revolution in philosophy.¹ Here, however, Coleridge's words must be carefully noted.

"In Schelling's Natur-Philosophie, and the System des transcendentalen Idealismus," he writes, "I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do."²

From 1815 to 1817 Coleridge was Schelling's disciple. It was this close affinity with Schelling for a period, and his desire to render the system intelligible to his countrymen,³ that led Coleridge to risk his reputation for literary honesty in adopting whole portions of Schelling's writings as the basis for his own theory of the nature of poetry, and has led to the repeated charge of plagiarism with regard to his whole philosophy. Coleridge himself was aware of this charge and went out of his way to affirm that "all the main and fundamental ideas were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a single page of the German Philosopher."⁴ He attributes the coincidence to their "equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno"⁵ and "the same affectionate reverence for the labours of Behmen, and other mystics."⁶

His debt to Schelling, and his claim of independ-

1. Biographia Literaria, p. 74.

2. Ibid: p. 72.

3. Ibid: p. 74.

4. Ibid: p. 72.

5. Coleridge read Bruno in 1801. Anima Poetae, pp. 16-17; Vide Snyder: Coleridge on Giordano Bruno. (Modern Language Notes Vol. XLII. 7, Nov. 1927.)

6. Biographia Literaria, p. 73, Vide Snyder: Coleridge on Bohme (Publ. Mod. Lang. Ass. of Amer. Vol. XLV. 2, June 1930.)

ence from him, Coleridge thus made public. The question remains: when did Coleridge break with Schelling's philosophy? A note in Jacob Behmen's Aurora,¹ dated August 27th, 1818, expresses Coleridge's disillusionment with pantheism as found in Behmen. Coleridge finds that Behmen approaches perilously near to pantheism in two ways; first, in the "occasional substitution of the Accidents of his own peculiar acts of association.....for the laws and processes of the creaturely Spirit in universo," and second, "the confusion of the creaturely Spirit in the great moments of its renascence.....for the deific energies in Deity itself." Coleridge finds the first error "is radically the same as that of Spinoza," and both errors "the same as that of Schelling and his followers." Coleridge continues to relate how earlier he was himself

"intoxicated with the vernal fragrance and effluvia from the flowers and first fruits of Pantheism, unaware of its bitter root, pacifying my religious feelings meantime by the dim Distinction, that tho' God was = the World, the World was not = God - as if God were a Whole composed of Parts, of which the World was one!"

It seems certain, then, that sometime between 1817 (the date of the publication of the Biographia Literaria) and August 1818, Coleridge came to see the pantheistic implications of Schelling's philosophy. It was impossible for him to accept such implications with its blotting out of all moral and religious distinctions. Again, the actual emergence of the conviction with regard to Schelling was preceded by a period of "incubation." If Crabb Robinson is to be trusted, Coleridge was

1. Op.cit. pp.125-7; Ottery St. Mary Marginalia II, pp.184-188.

criticising Schelling's system as early as 1810.¹ More important is a letter to Frere of July 16, 1816, which reveals Coleridge as a humourist, the butt of his humour being the "Physiosophy of the Schellingians."² In December 1817, Coleridge admits he is "unsatisfied with his conclusions" and does not consider him "altogether a trustworthy philosopher."³

Three other German thinkers remain to be mentioned - Jacobi, Hegel, and Schleiermacher. It is difficult to estimate precisely the extent of Jacobi's influence on Coleridge's thought. As early as 1852, Shedd drew attention to the relationship of Coleridge to Jacobi,⁴ but it has remained for later critics to examine the question in more detail. Dr. Winkelmann's conclusion is that "Coleridge's relation to Jacobi was not only of longer duration but must have been incomparably deeper than that to Schelling."⁵ Dr. Wellek goes beyond this in his assertion that Coleridge made "a reconstruction of Kant for the purposes of a philosophy of faith."⁶ This extreme conclusion of Wellek cannot, however, be accepted. What is clear is that by 1818, Coleridge was in sufficient sympathy with Jacobi to accept his definition of reason as the organ of spiritual vision.⁷ It was Jacobi's insistence on the immediacy of knowledge which awoke the warm response in Coleridge. But here they parted company. Holding as he did to

1. Robinson: op.cit. I, p.305. Note of Nov.15,1810.

2. Unpublished Letters II. p.172.

3. Letters, II, p.683.

4. Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Introductory Essay, pp.26-27.

5. Winkelmann: Coleridge und die kantische Philosophie, p.145.

6. Wellek: op.cit., p.132.

7. The Friend, Essay V, First Landing Place, p.102.

the unity of consciousness, Coleridge could never be satisfied with Jacobi's placing of faith above and beyond reason. It is the recognition of this that prompts Dr. Muirhead, in the most recent examination of this whole question, to argue that Coleridge was "in a true sense metaphysical rather than mystical."¹ His article refutes conclusively the claims of Wellek. Its general conclusions may be endorsed.

Of Hegel, Coleridge knew very little. True, he was acquainted with Hegel's Logic,² but by the time he came to read Hegel, his own philosophy had been firmly settled. His interest in Hegel lay chiefly in the confirmation which Hegel afforded him of the value of his own polar logic.³

Again, Coleridge's acquaintance with Schleiermacher may be said to be slight. Certainly no reference to the great German theologian appears in Coleridge's published works. That he knew Schleiermacher's Reden is seen from an entry in the Semina Rerum dated early in 1826.⁴ He values the Reden as a sound work on morals, but criticises it as offering no solution to the religious problem of redemption. Schleiermacher's Essay on Luke, a volume of sermons,⁵ and his "Ueber den sogenannten ersten Brief des Paulos an den Timotheos",⁶ were known to him; but there is no evidence that he read the Glaubenslehre. In view

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1. Coleridge: Studies by Several Hands, etc. p.197.
 2. Cf. Marinalia in Hegel: Wissenschaft der Logik, 1812 and 1816, printed in Snyder: Coleridge on Logic and Learning, pp. 162-165.
 3. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge: Studies by Several Hands etc., p.197.
 4. MS. C., p.48.
 5. Unpublished Letters, II, p.393.
 6. British Museum Copy.

of Coleridge's intimate knowledge of most contemporary German thought this lack, in the case of Schleiermacher, is striking. There can be, therefore, no question of influence.

One problem remains - the question of Coleridge's ultimate debt to German thinkers. Alongside his acknowledged indebtedness Coleridge himself constantly reiterated his claim of independence from the German philosophers. As early as 1802 he wrote, "I have read a great deal of German; but I do dearly, dearly, dearly love my own countrymen of old times, and those of my contemporaries who write in their spirit."¹ Of more interest is a notebook entry of 1804.

"In the preface of my metaphysical works, I should say - 'Once for all, read Kant, Fichte, &c., and then you will trace, or, if you are on the hunt, track me.' Why, then, not acknowledge your obligations step by step? Because I could not do so in a multitude of glaring resemblances without a lie, for they had been mine, formed and full-formed, before I had ever heard of these writers, because to have fixed on the particular instances in which I have really been indebted to these writers would have been hard, if possible, to me who read for truth and self-satisfaction, and not to make a book, and who always rejoiced and was jubilant when I found my own ideas well expressed by others - and, lastly, let me say, because (I am proud, perhaps, but) I seem to know that much of the matter remains my own, and that the soul is mine. I fear not him for a critic who can confound a fellow-thinker with a compiler."²

The bearing of this note on the whole question of German indebtedness is obvious. Moreover, in its revelation of the working of Coleridge's mind, its importance cannot be overestimated. In the light of this, his claim of independence, uttered in 1825, is understandable.

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1. Letters, I, p.373. Letter of July 13, 1802.
Cf. Appendix A. of The Friend, p. 414.
 2. Anima Poetae, p.106.

"I can not only honestly assert," he writes, "but I can satisfactorily prove by reference to writings (Letters, Marginal Notes, and those in books that have never been in my possession since I first left England for Hamburg, etc.) that all the elements, the differentials, as the algebraists say, of my present opinions existed for me before I had even seen a book of German Metaphysics, later than Wolf and Leibnitz, or could have read it, if I had."¹

Coleridge must be taken at his word. His debt to Kant was in essence a formal one. Kant supplied him with the framework of reason and understanding into which Coleridge fitted the content of his own philosophy. Wilde has grasped the situation clearly. He uses the phrase "Platonism illuminated by Kant" to summarize Coleridge's development.² Fichte and Schelling by their emphasis on the dynamic in man, strengthened and confirmed him in what he had "toiled out for himself."

VI. The Final Stage:- Christian Theist.

It was this constant toiling out for himself which led him on, ever checking his philosophy by his experience, and his experience by his religious conscience. In 1808 Southey wrote of him that "Hartley was ousted by Berkeley, Berkeley by Spinoza, and Spinoza by Plato."³ But still the track led on, on through the seventeenth century British divines, on through the "Hebrew and Christian theology" to the point where he could speak of the circle as nearing completion.

"The metaphysical disquisition at the end of the first volume of the Biographia Literaria is unformed and immature;- it contains the fragments of the truth, but it is not fully thought out. It is wonderful to myself to think how infinitely more profound my views now are, and

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1. Letters, II, p.735. Cf. Letters, II, pp. 681-682.
 2. Wilde: The Development of Coleridge's Mind, (The Philosophical Review Vol. XXVIII, #2, March 1919.)
 3. Quoted by Campbell: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p.165n.

yet how much clearer they are withal. The circle is completing; the idea is coming round to, and to be, the common sense."¹

By 1806 the main guideposts to this philosophy of spiritual realism had been erected. In a letter of October 13, 1806, Coleridge works out in a detailed, though characteristically involved fashion, the positions which form the basis of all his later writings. God and the soul, reason and understanding, death and immortality, are all considered in turn.² It was with these questions that Coleridge was concerned for the remainder of his days. As early as the period of The Friend it became clear that he was seeking to prove that "true philosophy rather leads to Christianity" than contains anything preclusive of it.³ Gradually this aim came to dominate his mind as the Biographia Literaria of 1817, the Lay Sermons of 1816 and 1817, and The Friend of 1818 clearly show. Finally, in the Aids to Reflection of 1825 the position is reached that "the Christian Faith is the Perfection of Human Intelligence."⁴ This attempt to integrate philosophy and religion into one complete unity was the dominant passion of his later days. Literature, politics, science, philosophy, theology - all continued to pour their streams into the measureless caverns of his mind. It is impossible to trace completely his "oceanic" reading, although it is evident that his favourite field was the theological literature of the Stuart Period - Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, Baxter, Bunyan,

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1. Table Talk, p.293. June 28, 1834.
 2. Unpublished Letters, I, pp.352-360.
 3. Letters, II, p.539. December 31, 1808.
 4. Aids, xvi.

Leighton and Fuller. But one thing is certain. His mind continued "growing to the last," and all his reading furnished material for the proposed Opus Maximum.¹ In this Opus Maximum Coleridge sought a view of the universe that would satisfy the demands of his philosophic mind for unity, and would provide the answer to that inward craving for fellowship with the Divine. At the time of his death in 1834, the work had not been completed. Sufficient material is available, however, to indicate the main outlines of this comprehensive system towards the completion of which he strove to the end.

1. Vide Snyder: Coleridge on Logic and Learning, p.8, for a list of the more important references to this work.
Vide Unpublished Letters, II, 464, for a supplementary list.

CHAPTER III.

Religion and Christianity

I. Philosophy and Religion

"There is a sense", writes Dr. Muirhead, "in which Coleridge's whole philosophy was a Philosophy of Religion."¹ This judgment confirms what Coleridge wrote concerning himself in 1798. At the height of his powers as a poet and with his mind already deeply engrossed in metaphysical studies, he wrote:-

"To the cause of Religion I solemnly devote all my best faculties; and if I wish to acquire knowledge as a philosopher and fame as a poet, I pray for grace that I may continue to feel what I now feel, that my greatest reason for wishing the one and the other, is that I may be enabled by my knowledge to defend Religion ably, and by my reputation to draw attention to the defence of it."²

The evidence of his writings, published and unpublished, is corroborative. Through all the myriad interests of his omnivorous mind, from the first great poem of his life to the last letter penned on his death-bed, the religious "motif" may be traced. Religion, it may be said with certainty, was the dominant passion of his life.

Moreover, the history of his spiritual pilgrimage reveals to what extent he was a genuinely religious man.

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher. p.217. Letter of Jan. 1798.
2. Unpublished Letters, I, p.94.

This history is summed up admirably in Muirhead's words:-

"What drove Coleridge from Unitarian Deism to Spinoza's 'intellectual love of God', thence to Schelling's 'intellectual vision' of Him, and forward from that again, was the failure of one and all to satisfy the demand of the heart for fellowship with God."¹

Wilde recognizes this also, as he writes, "It is never impersonal curiosity that draws him on, but always a hunger for an ever greater satisfaction of his spiritual needs."²

Fellowship with God is the touchstone to which all schemes of philosophy must be brought. And fellowship with God is religion. Coleridge's main criticism of deism is that it fails at this very point.

"The utter rejection of all present and living communion with the Universal Spirit impoverishes Deism itself, and renders it as cheerless as Atheism, from which indeed it would differ only by an obscure impersonation of what the Atheist receives unpersonified, under the name of Fate or Nature."³

Speculative reason may try to bridge the chasm between the finite and the infinite. But religion alone can "overbridge" the gulf. It can do this in that

"it unites in its purposes the desiderata of the speculative and the practical being; that its acts, including its events, are truths and objects of philosophic insight, and vice versa that the truths, in which it consists, are to be considered as acts and manifestations of that being who is at once the Power and the Truth, the Power and the All-powerful, the Truth and the True."⁴

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1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher. p.219.
 2. Wilde: The Development of Coleridge's Thought. (The Philosophical Review, Vol. XXVIII, #2, March, 1919. p.148.)
 3. Aids, p.50.
 4. MS.B.3, pp.204-205.

Elsewhere he writes:-

"In my system I have ever regarded all three parts, viz. of Theognosy, ὡς περὶ τῶν ἀχρόνων; of Physiogony; and of Anthropology: - not as Religion but as the Antecedent Grounds and Conditions of Religion.....In other words, Religion includes Philosophy; but Philosophy does not include Religion."¹

This is the constant theme of Coleridge. It is, therefore, of interest to compare further the relation between philosophy and religion as formulated in his published writings. In the Appendix to the Lay Sermon of 1816 Coleridge holds that "Reason and religion differ only as a twofold application of the same power."² In this particular case reason is "the knowledge of the laws of the whole considered as one." In contrast to the understanding, which concerns itself with "particulars" in time and space, it is "the science of the universal." Religion, on the other hand, is

"the consideration of the particular and individual (in which respect it takes up and identifies with itself the excellence of the understanding) but, of the individual, as it exists and has its being in the universal (in which respect it is one with the pure reason.)"³

Coleridge's passing reference to "reason, religion and the will" in man as a symbol of Tri-unity⁴ would seem to indicate, at first sight, that Coleridge grounds religion in the emotions. Further reading, however, corrects this first impression. Religion is a total act of the soul. "Even so doth religion finitely express

- 1.. MS.C., p.115. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.217. (Muirhead quotes freely.)
2. Biographia Literaria, p.339.
3. Ibid, pp.339-340.
4. Ibid, p.340.

the unity of the Infinite Spirit by being a total act of the soul."¹ In religion, Coleridge holds, "there is no abstraction."²

In 1817, the Biographia Literaria closed with a personal apologia:-

"This has been my object, and this alone can be my defence.....the unquenched desire I mean, not without the consciousness of having earnestly endeavoured to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptations of scorners, by showing that the scheme of Christianity, as taught in the liturgy and homilies of our Church, though not discoverable by human reason, is yet in accordance with it; that link follows link by necessary consequence; that religion passes out of the ken of reason only where the eye of reason has reached its own horizon; and that Faith is then but its continuation: even as the day softens away into the sweet twilight, and twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the darkness."³

In the Aids of 1825 Coleridge becomes more specific as he affirms "that the Christian Faith is the Perfection of Human Intelligence."⁴ Prudence, morality and religion are distinct. Religion contains and supposes the first two, but is "more and higher than Morality."⁵

Faith is seen as the "blossoming and the fructifying process" of reason.⁶ He holds that there is "a difference in kind between religious truths and the deductions of speculative science.....The former are not only equally rational

1. Biographia Literaria, p.354.

2. Ibid: p.354.

3. Ibid: pp.301-302.

4. Aids, Introduction xvi.

5. Ibid: Introduction xvii. The Church is ruined, or brought to the verge of ruin, by preaching morality, i.e. first Platonic, then Stoic and lastly Epicurean Ethics."

Cf. Southey: Life of Wesley, Note on I, p.190.

6. Aids, p.173n.

with the latter, but.....they alone appeal to reason in the fulness and living reality of their power."¹ Any attempt therefore to explain the mysteries of the Christian religion - sin and redemption - by bringing them into "comprehensible notions," "does by its very success furnish presumptive proof of its failure."²

The mysteries of faith are not "notions" but reason, "Reason in its highest form of Self-affirmation."³ Understood thus, Coleridge hopes to show "the perfect rationality" of the Christian Doctrines and "their freedom from all just objection when examined by their proper organs, the Reason and Conscience of Man."⁴

It is easily understandable from these passages, how both rationalist and orthodox could find a basis for their criticism. To the one, it has meant simply that Coleridge abandoned "reason" for the "incredibilities" of the Christian faith; and that he indulged in verbal legerdemain in order to justify his position. Carlyle's famous indictment of Coleridge as one who "knew the sublime secret of believing by 'the reason' what 'the understanding' had been obliged to fling out as incredible"⁵ has found echo in all subsequent criticism from the rationalist side. "A pernicious teaching of double truth pervades Coleridge's acquiescence in all the doctrines of the

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1. Aids, p. 205.
 2. Ibid: p. 185n.
 3. Ibid: xviii.
 4. Ibid: p. 102.
 5. Carlyle: Life of John Sterling, p.231.

Anglican Church,"¹ writes Dr. Wellek. "We do not exaggerate," he continues, "saying that Coleridge sometimes teaches the old adage: *credo quia absurdum est*."² Coleridge, he concludes, became in the end "a defender of orthodoxy, of resignation, a prophet of the end and failure of Reason."³

On the other hand, Coleridge's speculative methods made him suspect in the eyes of contemporary orthodoxy. Typical is the judgment of John Henry Newman. Although he recognized Coleridge's contribution to a "higher philosophy," Newman wrote of him as one who "indulged a liberty of speculation, which no Christian can tolerate, and advocated conclusions which were often heathen rather than Christian."⁴

The difficulty arises in the fact that both speculative idealism and religious faith lie side by side in Coleridge's mind. This fact has been interpreted variously. Applying the Kantian measuring-rod, Dr. René Wellek finds that Coleridge does not fit the measure. He argues, therefore, that Coleridge deserted from the ranks of critical philosophy to a philosophy of faith.⁵ Coleridge, Dr. Wellek holds, came finally "to accept the dualism of speculation and life, of the head and the heart.....He made a philosophy of this dualism of the head and the heart."⁶

1. Wellek: *op.cit.*, p.129.

2. *Ibid*: *op.cit.*, p.129.

3. *Ibid*: *op.cit.*, p.135.

4. British Critic, April 1839, Vide Newman: Essays: Critical and Historical, I, pp.268-269.

5. Wellek: *op.cit.*, p.132.

6. *Ibid*: p.134.

Coleridge's own words, however, must not be forgotten. At a time when his earlier philosophy had proved itself inadequate he wrote,

"I have been myself sorely afflicted, and have..... found no comfort, till it pleased the Unimaginable High and Lofty One to make my Heart more tender in regard of religious feelings. My philosophical refinements, and metaphysical Theories lay by me in the hour of anguish, as toys by the bedside of a child deadly sick."¹

These words, written in 1796, are prophetically true of the whole course of his later thought. Any metaphysical theory which failed to do justice to the deep spiritual needs of his nature thereby proved itself inadequate. As he himself put it later, "A metaphysical solution, that does not instantly tell you something in the heart is grievously to be suspected as apocryphal."²

But this does not mean that Coleridge came to accept a dualism of the "head and the heart" as the basis of his philosophy. Rather he saw that the demands of each must receive recognition in a larger synthesis. To this he strove. "Indeed," he writes, "it is by rebuilding the Doctrine of Realism on sure foundations that I hope to effect what Raymond of Sabunde so nobly attempted."³ If the change in terminology be not confusing, we may borrow from Smuts and say that Coleridge was a "spiritual holist." Recognizing this, Dr. Muirhead

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1. Unpublished Letters, I, p.64. Letter of December 1796.
 2. Letters, I, p.428. Letter of August 7, 1803.
 3. Note at end of Vol. 8 (2nd half) of Tennemann: Geschichte der Philosophie, British Museum Copy.

dissents from Dr. Wellek's somewhat damaging criticism. He holds that whatever may be the defects of Coleridge's philosophy in detail, "it is in a true sense metaphysical rather than mystical."¹ In this particular case, it must be noted, Muirhead's use of the term metaphysical indicates a judgment in favour of Coleridge's larger synthesis of the idealism of the head, and the realism of the heart.² In this light, Muirhead's judgment may be endorsed.

It has been said of the writings of Ernst Troeltsch: "Religious faith and mental freedom meet and struggle on every page. He will not abandon either,"³ Something very similar may be said of Coleridge. He will not abandon either philosophy or religious faith. In the last analysis there can be no ultimate dualism between the two.⁴ Coleridge's aim, as Tulloch recognized, is to integrate the two, "to restore the broken harmony between reason and religion."⁵ And this, as Hort suggested early, is traceable to the Platonic doctrine of the ultimate identity of knowledge and moral excellence.⁶

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1. Muirhead: Studies by Several Hands, p.197.
 2. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.58, where the development of Coleridge's mind is summed up-"In the course of the second decade of the new century Coleridge had passed from the pantheism not only of Spinoza but of Schelling, and was working in the direction of a view which should be a synthesis of the realism which it represented with the idealism of Kant."
 3. H.R.Mackintosh: Nineteenth Century Dogmatic, Lecture of Feb. 2, 1935, New College, Edinburgh.
 4. Cf. Aids, p.42.
 5. Tulloch: op.cit., p.14.
 6. Cambridge Essays, p.325.

Coleridge stand out in this respect against both his contemporaries, Schleiermacher and Hegel. Unlike Schleiermacher, he refuses to vindicate Christianity by cutting it adrift from philosophy. Unlike Hegel, he holds firmly to Christian faith. On the one hand he refuses to set Christianity apart; on the other hand he refuses to dissolve it in the "acids of philosophy." Philosophy is necessary. Alone it is insufficient. Though knowledge may be unified by reason, Coleridge had learned through bitter trial that it is not enough. Not only must experience be integrated; it must also be mastered. Mastery of life is attained in "the binding" (religio) of man's will to a Will that is greater than itself.

Philosophy, even though it shall have become "the habit of referring to the Invisible as to a Supreme Will, revealing itself in Reason and pouring forth in Life," is not enough.

"This is a constituent of Religion;" Coleridge writes, "but something is still wanting. To be Religion, it must be the Reference of an intelligent responsible Will finite to an Absolute Will! and the Referant must refer as a Will, and a Life, i.e. a Person, to a living I AM. We may feel from, and about a thing, an event, a quality - we can feel for whatever is sentient - but we feel toward a Person only. The Personal in me is the ground and condition of Religion: and the Personal alone is the Object."¹

This is well said. Religion, to Coleridge, is basically a personal relationship and must be construed in personal terms. It reveals to us his fundamental religious realism in another aspect.

1. MS.C., pp.125-126. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p. 36, where the passage is quoted freely.

II. Religion and Revelation.

Philosophy, he never tires of saying, points beyond itself to religion. At the commencement of his long friendship with Green, Coleridge feels that philosophy

"is either nothing, a mere generic term - or that it must end in revealed religion.....I see beforehand that there can be no philosophy without religion; but that there may be religion without any philosophy except what is involved and contained in the being a Christian."¹

Moreover, this letter indicates that his mind is turning on the the question of natural and revealed religion. By the period of the Aids this question is still to the fore. Coleridge decides in favour of revelation, as he states that

"the whole Scheme of the Christian Faith, including all the Articles of Belief common to the Greek and Latin, the Roman and the Protestant Churches, with the threefold proof, that it is ideally, morally, and historically true, will be found exhibited and vindicated in a proportionally larger work, the principal labour of my life since manhood, and which I am now preparing for the press under the title, 'Assertion of Religion, as necessarily involving Revelation; and of Christianity, as the only Revelation of permanent and universal validity.'²

The "Assertion of Religion" here referred to is but another name for his unfinished Opus Maximum.³ The work, as such, does not concern us immediately. What is of import is the assertion made both here and in the manuscript Opus:⁴ first, that religion necessarily involves revelation; and second, that Christianity is "the only Revelation of permanent and universal

1. Unpublished Letters, II, pp.237-238. April 1, 1818.

2. Aids, p.103.

3. Cf. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. p.87.

4. MS.B.2, p.85.

validity." With regard to the first point, Muirhead has pointed out that in the Aids there is some ambiguity in the use of the term revelation.¹ It is therefore of interest to find in the Semina Rerum a long note in which Coleridge gives some meaning to the term.²

The discussion is based on the passage already quoted: "The Personal in me is the ground and condition of Religion: and the Personal alone is the Object,"³ Coleridge holds that this personal communion is reflected in hope, love, fear from love, and veneration. These constitute religious feeling and radiate from a self to the object which has will as its ground and source.

"Religion requires the sense of my Self, in order to the desire to pass out of the Self - it must affirm itself as potential in order that I may deny it as actual. It must be offered in order to be refused - must be possessed in order to be sacrificed."⁴

On this basis he asks "Does a Religion imply or necessarily require a Revelation in an historical form, as a part at least and necessary accompaniment of the Religion? Does it require a revelation at all - even an internal Revelation?"⁵

The answer is that religion if it is to meet the test of the definition cannot be purely subjective, for a merely subjective illumination, though supernatural, has its evidence exclusively for the mind so illumined. If it were

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1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.245.
 2. MS.C., p.126 seq.
 3. Ibid: p.126.
 4. Ibid: p.126.
 5. Ibid: p.127.

wholly subjective, then religion would be like mathematics. It would then be solely a science, resting on scientific grounds and scientifically communicable. It would not be religion.

"A religion not objective, the Object of which subsists only in the Subject, even tho' it should be common to all human Subjects, is no Religion, as a square Circle is no Circle, but a contradiction of terms."¹

Again, turning to his familiar doctrine of ideas, he holds that an idea differs from a theorem or sensuous intuition in implying always an inherent or correspondent object. It follows from this "that even tho' we should derive a scheme of Religion from the Reason, as the Source of Ideas, yet that Reason must be regarded as a Revelation."²

The further question, however, arises: whether a scheme of faith on which religious feelings can be grounded can be conceived derivable from a subjective Revelation alone; in other words, "whether a Religion merely rational, or as wholly derived from this inward Light can be imagined?"³ It is true that this "subjective illumination", or spiritual discernment of the truth of the Ideas, and faith in their reality, is the substance of religion. But subjective illumination is only one pole. It requires an appropriate experience, "an exciting cause" to call it forth.

"The Reason itself, or whatever other name may be chosen to express the distinctive marks of Humanity, and the ground of Man's susceptibility of the Spiritual Light, or enlightening Spirit, the characteristic faculty which renders Man the congruous

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1. MS.C., p.127.
 2. Ibid: p.127.
 3. Ibid: p.131.



Recipient of the Lucific Word so sublimely affirmed by the Evangelist, has to be called from the merely potential Being into act and actual existence. Tho' we should reject the opinion, that the Mind at our coming into the world is = a blank Sheet of Paper; we must at all events admit that whatever characters may have been impressed on the sheet, are written in Sympathetic Ink, and need an exciting cause to render them apparent."¹

The development of the individual, morally and intellectually, under the stimuli of exciting causes, is true also of the race.

On this basis Coleridge feels that he has demonstrated a priori,

"that Reason itself rejects the hypothesis of a Religion excluding all but a Subjective illumination of the Reason common to all men and to the manifestation of which no determinate Time or Occasion can be affixed; but that (what we can only call) Miracle and outward Revelation enter into the very Idea of Religion, as the indispensable Conditions of its' actual existence in Man."²

This is all that Reason can attempt to show a priori. It remains for history and judgment to decide on the character and credibility of those schemes that claim to be vouchsafed by divine revelation.³ The importance of this concept to his own mind is seen by the place assigned to it in the 1828 sketch of the Opus Maximum. Part Third, Introduction AA of this scheme reads:- "Proof a priori of a Revelation.....

1. MS.C., p.128.

2. Ibid: pp.128-129.

3. Ibid: N.B. In this connection a passage from the Opus Maximum is of interest: "The probability of an event is a part of its historic evidence and constitutes its proof presumptive or evidence a priori; and the degree of the evidence a posteriori requisite to the satisfactory conviction of the actual occurrence of an event stands in an inverse ratio to the strength or weakness of the evidence a priori." (MS.B.2, p.22. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic, etc. pp.134-135.)

& that Religion implies Revelation or Religion and Revelation are synonymous Terms and Revealed Religion a Pleonasm."¹ This we may take to be Coleridge's general line of approach to the whole question of religion and revelation. Religion is not simply an affair of man. Nor is it to be regarded simply as subjective illumination. Religion is a bi-polar relationship, whether regarded from the standpoint of the personal subjects involved - God and man - or from the standpoint of the ideas of religion held by man and their "exciting cause." That is to say, Revelation enters into the very idea of religion. It is part of his general theistic view. Galloway has defined revelation as "an apprehension of truth which rests, directly or indirectly, on the activity of God"² - a definition which comes close to expressing what is the heart of Coleridge's view.

This view is linked closely with his general Platonic outlook. The historic facts of religion are the symbols of the ideas of religion. Hence,

"A Religion, that is, a true religion, must consist of ideas and facts both: not of ideas alone without facts, for then it would be mere Philosophy; - nor of facts alone without ideas, of which those facts are the symbols, or out of which they arise, or upon which they are grounded: for then it would be mere History."³

In short, religion "is distinguished from philosophy on one

1. MS.C., p.133 seq. (Snyder: Coleridge on Logic, etc. p.5. Mention is made both here and on p.129 of the Semina Rerum of the "Gillman-recipe or Pharmacopoeian Memorandum Book" which Coleridge used as a notebook and in which this question is claimed to be developed. It is doubtful if the notebook is now extant.)

Cf. Aids, p.120.

2. Galloway: Philosophy of Religion, p.582.

3. Table Talk, p.144.

hand and history on the other by being both in one."¹

This last definition is basic to Coleridge. It enters into the very "stuff" of his religious philosophy. It is, in fact, the definition of religion with which the Opus Maximum commences.²

III. Christianity.

A. Finality.

If, then, reason asserts a priori the necessity of a revelation, the only question that remains is whether any particular religion can be regarded as an ultimate revelation. A manuscript fragment in the British Museum³ indicates Coleridge's method of approach to the problem. It is based on the position already discussed, namely, that religion implies revelation. Continuing, Coleridge holds:-

"There can be but one Religion, but there may be many schemes of Doctrines so called.

The one Religion may be revealed gradually, at different times, to different races - and in this sense of the words there may be said to be many Revelations possible or we cannot deny the possibility of many Revelations. By what test are we to determine the one Religion? By what criteria may we distinguish the legitimate claimants to Revelation from the false. The most obvious, and at the same time the most feasible plan would be: from the whole number of known claimants to select some one and to commence with the examination of this. If, as is at least possible, we should find in the scheme itself, aided by the history and the admitted results of its' introduction satisfactory proofs of this being a Revelation we may be certain of the

1. MS.B.3, pp.204, 132-133.
2. Ibid.
3. Egerton 2801, folio 202.

falsehood of all that can be shewn to contradict it and shall have at least a negative test or standard in our possession."¹

Elsewhere, referring to the necessity of revelation, he asks, "Is the Christian such a Religion?"² If this be doubtful, then "is there any other Religion, known or conceivable, which might be substituted for Christianity?"³ But of the known positive religions of mankind Coleridge holds, "as a position too evident to need any proof," that "there is none which rejecting Christianity we should not reject a fortiori."⁴

In line with this is the caveat uttered in the Aids: "Beware," he writes, "of Arguments against Christianity, which cannot stop there, and consequently ought not to have commenced there."⁵

There can be no doubt as to the position Coleridge held. The Aids of 1825 commence with the explicit affirmation that "the Christian Faith is the Perfection of Human Intelligence."⁶ Moreover, the "Assertion of Religion," announced in the Aids, states explicitly that Christianity is "the only Revelation of permanent and universal validity."⁷ Throughout the Aids religion is practically synonymous with Christianity. Christianity alone reflects the true character of religion, and

1. Egerton 2801, p.202.

2. MS.C, p.126.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid: pp.126-127.

5. Aids, p.194.

6. Ibid; Introduction xvi.

7. Ibid: p.103.

in this sense is "the only true religion."¹

B. Evidences.

"The principal Labour" of Coleridge's life was to establish this position. Christianity, he hoped to show, is "ideally, morally and historically true."² But his method of proof differed totally from that of Paley and the writers on "Evidences," upon whom he never wearied of pouring scorn:

"Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge of his need of it; and you may safely trust it to its own Evidence, - remembering only the express declaration of Christ himself: No man cometh to me, unless the Father leadeth him."³

The so-called "proof from miracles" is therefore no proof of divine testimony in the strict sense. "I believe in the miracles of Christ because I believe in Christ, not vice versa. They are not the foundation of my faith, but the result and condition of it."⁴ The only "evidence" of Christianity is Christianity itself. It carries its proof inherent in its very nature.

"The truth revealed through Christ has its evidence in itself, and the proof of its divine authority in its fitness to our nature and needs; - the clearness and cogency of this proof being proportionate to the degree of self-knowledge in each individual hearer."⁵

He holds to a religious pragmatism. Christianity is a living movement rather than a mere series of articles or a traditional

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1. MS.C. Printed Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.36.
 2. Aids, p.103.
 3. Ibid: p.272. Cf. Table Talk, p.155.
 4. Note in Stillingfleet: Origenes Sacrae, p.253. British Museum Copy.
 5. Confessions, p.319.

creed. "Christianity," he writes, "is not a Theory, or a Speculation; but a Life; - not a Philosophy of Life, but a Life and a living Process." Its proof and test is experimental - "Try it."¹

In addition to this moral and individual proof, however, there is an "historical" one.

"Christianity has likewise its historical evidences, and these as strong as is compatible with the nature of history, and with the aims and objects of a religious dispensation. And to all these Christianity itself, as an existing Power in the world, and Christendom as an existing Fact, with the no less evident fact of a progressive expansion, give a force of moral demonstration that almost supersedes particular testimony."²

In Coleridge's hands, Christianity thus vindicates itself as ideally, morally and historically true.

C. Judaism plus Greece.

Why then, he asks in an unpublished note,

"is philosophy ever to be set up as the rival, rather than as the friend and natural companion of Christianity? What is Christianity but a divine and pre-eminent philosophy, a stream in whose depths the elephant may swim, and in whose practical and saving truths the lamb may ford?"³

Like all science and all philosophy the Christian philosophy is grounded on assumptions, or "assertions", "the proof of which no man can give to another, yet every man may find for himself."⁴ These assertions are three in number and have reference to three ultimate facts, namely, the reality of

1. Aids, p.134.

2. Confessions, p.319. Cf. Aids, p.134.

3. Stillingfleet: Origenes Sacrae, p.320. British Museum Copy.

4. Aids, p.90.

the law of conscience, the existence of a responsible will, and the existence of evil. "The first is a Fact of Consciousness; the second a Fact of Reason necessarily concluded from the first; and the third a Fact of History interpreted by both."¹

These are the "radical data" - to use Tulloch's phrase² - of Coleridge's religious philosophy. Apart from them there is no religion. The function of the Christian faith is to build up the spiritual life out of these internal realities. It does this by remedying the evil, educating the conscience and strengthening the will. Christianity is thus a religion of redemption.³ It has two poles or "moments" - sin and redemption.⁴

From this aspect, then, Christianity is more than philosophy. Regarded also from the other standpoint of his general definition of religion as history plus philosophy, Christianity is more than philosophy alone. It is "Judaism and Greece."⁵

"Religion is," he writes, "Ideas contemplated as Facts. Remove the symbolic character, the speculative Truth that is represented, and the Religion becomes mere History, real or imagined. 'There is a God' is a philosophic Dogma; but of itself not a Religion. But that God manifested himself to Abraham or Moses, and sent them to make known that he made the World, and formed Man out of the Ground, and breathed into him a living Soul * this is Religion. Hence Religion necessarily consists of Traditions."⁶

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1. Aids, p. 91.
 2. Tulloch: op.cit., p.16.
 3. Aids, p.195 seq.
 4. Ibid: p.206.
 5. MS.C, p.121.
 6. Ibid: p.42.

Thus:-

"Christianity consists of two ingredients. The first is History.....That which is above Time, and indifferent to all times - that which has no appropriate exponent in any one particular thing, Act, incident or Image - most certainly does not present itself to our minds, as historical. What then? Reflect a moment and ask yourself whether any other answer can be returned (than) that it is an Idea or Eternal Truth. This, we say, is the only true Idea of God or this is the Idea which the Christian Revelation teaches us to entertain of the God-head. This then is the other Element. The facts of Religion in order to be religious facts or subjects of religious Belief must be grounded on Ideas and severally and collectively united with Ideas."¹

This union of idea and fact is affirmed supremely in the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation.

"God manifest in the Flesh. The Idea and the Fact, the Event, of the Theanthropy, that the Eternal became historical and the focal center of all History - this is the inmost Soul, the individualizing Principle, of the Christian Religion."²

It is no accident that his favourite New Testament writers are St. John and St. Paul. They are "Christianity itself."³ In keeping with this Coleridge asserts that his aim is "to bring back our faith and affections to the simplicity of the Gospel Facts, by restoring the facts of the Gospel to their union with the Ideas or Spiritual Truths therein embodied or thereby revealed."⁴

Hence, from this general standpoint,

"Christianity is a growth, a Becoming, a Progression:History, therefore, and History under its' highest form of Moral freedom, is that alone in which the Idea of Christianity can be realized.....The

1. MS.C, p.91. August 1, 1826.

2. Ibid: p.33. Cf. "God manifested in the flesh is Eternity in the form of Time." (Aids, p.209n).

3. MS.C. Note at end.

4. Ibid: p.91.

Idea of the Christian Religion can be realized only in the 'Lives of Christians.'

In the light of all this it is difficult to see how Muirhead can dismiss so easily Coleridge's relation to Christianity. Although he dissents from the extreme rationalist position as illustrated in Wellek's criticism, yet he retains something of this bias in dealing with the specific Christian elements in Coleridge's thought. True, he claims that his main concern is with Coleridge's

"general interpretation of the meaning of religion, what beliefs it seemed to him to involve, as to the nature of God and the destiny of the human soul, how far it seemed to him possible to justify these beliefs to the speculative reason, finally, and only as a corollary, the place he assigned to the Christian religion and the theology that has come to be bound up with it."¹

But if Coleridge himself is to be believed, then the Christian element in his thought cannot be placed in the class of "corollary." The "beliefs it seemed to him to involve" were, in the last resort, Christian beliefs. They therefore cannot be classed as secondary in importance in his philosophy. What Coleridge meant by "Christian Beliefs" or Christianity is seen in his frequent references to the beliefs common to all the Christian communions, the Unitarians excepted. It was catholic Christianity that he had in mind.²

True, his were not simply the beliefs of current orthodoxy. He differed radically on the interpretation of

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.218-219.

2. Aids, p.103. Cf. Appendix B.

certain doctrines, notably the doctrines of sin, redemption, and the Scriptures. But to say this is only to recognize how well he fulfilled his self-imposed task of freeing Christian theology from the intellectual and moral difficulties in the hyper-calvinism and extreme evangelicalism of his day.¹

IV. Spirit, Will and Personality.

In the days of a faculty psychology, Coleridge held firmly to the unity of thought and action.² He was well aware that analytic distinctions do not imply real divisions.

"Distinct notions," he writes, "do not suppose different things. When we make a three-fold distinction in human nature, we are fully aware that it is a distinction, not a division, and that in every act of mind the man unites the properties of sense, understanding, and reason."³

At the same time, Coleridge's basic metaphysical principle of the priority of will is reflected in his psychology. Thus he affirms, as above, the unity of personality. The ground of personality is, however, the will. "The Principle of our Personality - of that, I mean, by which we are responsible Agents; Persons, and not merely living Things" - is the will.⁴ And again: "His Will is the condition of his personality; the ground and condition of the attribute which constitutes him man."⁵ The will is not set in antithesis to the cognitive or emotional elements. "A Will conceived separately from Intelligence is a Non-entity and a mere

1. Cf. Tulloch: op.cit., pp.33-34.

2. Cf. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic, etc. p. 15.

3. The Friend, Section I, Essay III, p.117n.

4. Aids, p.42.

5. Ibid: p.190.

phantasm of abstraction,"¹ he writes in the Aids. And in the Huntingdon manuscript, referring to the Absolute, he writes,

"The Supreme Will is an idea incapable of abstraction. We not only cannot think of it abstracted from Intelligence and Love as real - for this would apply equally to the idea of an unbounded power; but we cannot think of it at all."²

Leaving for the moment the question of the Absolute as belonging properly to his metaphysics, we may note the refusal to dissociate the will from intelligence and love. This refusal in the case of the Absolute is equally true in the case of man. Hence Coleridge holds:-

"If there be aught Spiritual in Man, the Will must be such."³

"If there be a Will, there must be a Spirituality in Man."⁴ "The Will is pre-eminently the spiritual Constituent in our Being."⁵

"The Will is in an especial and pre-eminent sense the spiritual part of our Humanity."⁶

These passages are of vital importance in the understanding of Coleridge's thought. The will is conceived, not in the modern sense as an element in personality, but as the ground and principle of personality itself. "Personal" and "moral" and "spiritual" are practically synonymous with Coleridge. That this judgment is correct is borne out by Coleridge's own words, when he writes of the will as "the true and only strict synonyme of the word, I, or the intelligent Self."⁷ It follows that his constant references to the will -

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1. Aids, p.93.
 2. MS.H, pp.109-111.
 3. Aids, p.88.
 4. Ibid: p.88.
 5. Ibid: p.40
 6. Ibid: p.89.
 7. Ibid: p.92.

in the case of sin, of redemption, of faith, of fellowship with God - must be understood in the light of this principle.

It is convenient to note further two points in connection with Coleridge's conception of will. The first is the contrast drawn between nature and will. Will is by definition, "that which originates an act or state of Being."¹ The idea of will alone contains the idea of self-determination.² Nature, on the other hand, is subject to the law of continuity, and this law, "by a necessity arising out of its own constitution," the human understanding is compelled to conceive "only under the form of cause and effect." This being granted, it becomes true that

"Nature is a line in constant and continuous evolution. Its beginning is lost in the super-natural: and for our understanding, therefore, it must appear as a continuous line without beginning or end. But where there is no discontinuity there can be no origination, and every appearance of origination in nature is but a shadow of our own casting. It is a reflection from our own Will or Spirit. Herein, indeed, the Will consists. This is the essential character by which WILL is opposed to Nature as Spirit, and raised above Nature, as self-determining Spirit - this namely, that it is a power of originating an act or state."³

Nature is therefore said to be necessitated in contrast to the will as free.⁴ Moreover, the will must be self-determined ultimately, or it ceases to be a will under the law of perfect freedom.⁵ The will is therefore supernatural. Hence, in this

1. Aids, p.42n.

2. Ibid: p.190.

3. Ibid: p.176n. Cf. Streeter: Reality, where the concept of energy in nature is analyzed as a "shadow of our own casting."

4. Aids, p.42n.

5. Ibid: p.190.

sense, "Spiritual and Supernatural are Synonymous."¹

In keeping with this analysis of will as self-determined and "free," capable of originating, and of nature as necessitated, Coleridge holds that the will "cannot be contemplated in any of the forms of Space and Time."² This is, in fact, a corollary of the first principle, for he offers another definition of nature:- "Whatever is representable in the forms of Time and Space, is Nature.....Whatever is comprehended in Time and Space, is included in the Mechanism of Cause and Effect."³ He seeks to show that there are realities to which the relations of space and time are inapplicable and of these are spirit or will.

V. Theory of Language.

To Coleridge one of the chief sources of error in religion was the failure to distinguish between essential fact and pictorial representation. "The confusion," he writes, "of metaphor with reality is one of the fountains of the many-headed Nile of credulity."⁴ It is the familiar distinction between noumenon and phenomenon in a particular application. Coleridge never works out a complete theory of language, but he does clearly distinguish between fact and descriptive metaphor. On this he is clear and constantly insistent.⁵

1. Aids, p.42n.

2. Ibid: p.44.

3. Ibid: p.44.

4. Anima Poetae, p.149.

5. Cf. The Chapter on Religion and Redemption.

Further, he distinguishes between analogy, metaphor and symbol. "The language is analogous, wherever a thing, power, or principle in a higher dignity is expressed by the same thing, power, or principle in a lower but more known form."¹ As an example of this, Coleridge cites John III, 6. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." The latter half of the verse, Coleridge claims, contains the fact asserted, the first half contains the analogous fact, "by which it is rendered intelligible."² "Analogies," he holds, "are used in aid of Conviction."³

A metaphor, on the other hand, is merely a means of illustration. It is a figure of speech. This is borne out by Coleridge's statement, "Neither do I regard the words, born again, or spiritual life, as figures or metaphors."⁴ A metaphor is allegorical, "expressing a different subject but with a resemblance."⁵

In further distinction stands a symbol. In the Statesman's Manual, Appendix C, Coleridge gives his definition of a symbol. "By a symbol I mean.....an actual and an essential part of that, the whole of which it represents."⁶ In the Aids, Coleridge speaks of the nature of symbols as "always tautegorical, that is, expressing the same subject but with a

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1. Aids, p. 136.
 2. Ibid: p.136.
 3. Ibid: p.136.
 4. Ibid: p.136.
 5. Ibid: p.136.
 6. Statesman's Manual, Appendix, Biog. Lit. p.348.

difference."¹ Analogies, Coleridge holds further, furnish the material of symbols.² On the basis of this three-fold distinction, Coleridge grounds his definition of a Sacrament as a symbol.³ The distinction between analogy and metaphor furnishes the key to his treatment of the Pauline teaching on redemption.⁴ The general distinction between fact and representation is of undoubted value.⁵ Historically, it may be regarded as one of the "sources" of Horace Bushnell's more developed theory of language. Whether the particular distinctions between symbol, analogy and metaphor are of the same value is open to question. To Coleridge, at least, they are essential. They are typically Coleridgean. It may be pertinent to describe them as Coleridgean phenomena.

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1. Aids, p.136. Cf. Aids, p.212n, where Coleridge writes of the "wide difference between symbolical and allegorical."
 2. Ibid: p.136.
 3. See Chapter on Church and Sacraments.
 4. See Chapter on Religion and Redemption.
 5. Cf. the views of Sabatier and Menegoz.

CHAPTER IV.

General Philosophy.

"Previous to any rational examination of the Christian Religion we must determine first, and as far as history and philosophy are concerned, what the necessary postulates or assumptions are from which the examination must proceed, and, as far as the religion refers to the moral and religious being what state of mind the examinant must bring with him to the enquiry, the denial or absence of these being tantamount to a rejection of the whole beforehand by denial of the premises."¹

This long quotation, from the unpublished Opus Maximum, serves as a fitting introduction to the examination of the "necessary postulates or assumptions" in Coleridge's own philosophy. This philosophy, in the last analysis, was an attempt to reach some single underlying unity from which life, thought, religion, the universe derive, and in relation to which they have their meaning. This continual search for "unity in multeity" was the guiding star of all his wanderings.

I. Logic.

As early as 1803, Coleridge became convinced

1. MS.B. Supplementary.

that prefatory to any attempt to apprehend the ultimate meaning of experience some consideration must be given to the processes of thought itself. In a letter to Godwin in 1803¹ he claims to be engaged on a work on logic, "introductory to a system." In addition to a discussion of the common system of logic (Aristotle), it was to contain an outline of the history of logic and a summary of his own Organum Verè Organum, and to conclude with considerations of the practical value in science, medicine, politics, religion and law. This work survives in fragmentary form,² and has been analyzed by Muirhead.³ What is of interest is not so much his conclusion at this stage - namely, that the syllogism is in reality a petitio principii,⁴ - as his perception of the fundamental importance of the study of logic as the prerequisite to any "system" of philosophy.

Under the guidance of Kant⁵ and Mendelssohn⁶ Coleridge continued his study of the problems of logic. He came to see the impossibility of accepting the old formal logic. What was required was a logic able to do justice to

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1. Turnbull: op.cit., I, p.270.
Cf. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., pp.50-51
 2. See Snyder: op.cit., pp.53-66, 140-152.
 3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.62-64.
 4. Snyder: op.cit., p.143. "In every Syllogism I do in reality repeat the same thing in other words, yet at the same time I do something more; I recall to my memory a multitude of other facts and with them the important remembrance that they have all some one or more property in common."
 5. vide Wellek: loc.cit.
 6. vide Snyder: Studies in English and Germanic Philology, October 1929, for a study of Coleridge's relation to Mendelssohn.

the deeper movements of thought. By 1822 his mind was sufficiently clear on this point to enable him to dictate the manuscript, Logic,¹ which was to serve as an introduction to his great Logosophia - the Opus Maximum.

The Logic has been described and summarized by Miss Snyder in her Coleridge on Logic and Learning² and analyzed by Dr. Muirhead in his Coleridge as Philosopher,³ both of whom print numerous excerpts from the manuscript. In addition, Dr. Wellek has discussed the Logic from the standpoint of its relationship to Kant.⁴ The Logic, as planned, was to consist of three parts: the first, the Canon or Common Logic; the second, the Criterion, for the Detection of Errors in Reasoning; the third, the Organon, and Instrument for the Positive Discovery of Truth.⁵ It is not necessary, however, to follow Coleridge through the details of the argument of the Logic. What is important for our purpose is the general standpoint taken and the conclusions reached.

At the heart of Coleridge's Logic is the principle of trichotomy - identity, thesis, antithesis. He conceived it to be the special contribution of his system, although he denied that it was original with him. He developed it in opposition to the older logic founded on the principle

1. British Museum MSS., Egerton 2825, 2826.

2. Op. cit. pp.66-103.

3. Op. cit. pp.65-88.

4. Op.cit. pp.116-126.

5. Cf. Snyder, op.cit. pp.69-70n. for references in Coleridge to this scheme.

of dichotomy. In the first place, the older logic clearly is inadequate, as Lord Bacon showed in the case of investigations into nature.¹ By itself mere syllogistic reasoning proves nothing, a thousand syllogisms amounting merely to "nine hundred and ninety-nine superfluous illustrations of what a syllogism is." In this sense it is a "hollow science."²

In the second place, logic, like every abstract science, is based on an assumption which it has not the means of examining. It assumes a relation between subject and object, thought and thinker. But this is clearly a question involving ultimate reality. These realities are properly not objects of logic and "therefore cannot be submitted to a discussion or reasoning purely logical."³ If logic attempts to pass this limit, error is immediately encountered. "The first source therefore of falsehood in Logic is the abuse of and mis-application of Logic itself."⁴ Either everything is resolved into the object⁵ or into the subject, as in the case of Berkeleyan idealism;⁶ or, again, the possibility of any theory being denied, an unresolved dualism remains.

1. Logic, II, pp.179-187. Cf. Snyder: op.cit., pp.116-118. Cf. Muirhead: op.cit., pp.70-72.

2. Snyder: op.cit., p.81.

3. Ibid: p.87.

4. Ibid: p.87.

5. Cf. Biographia Literaria, p.124.

6. Cf. Biographia Literaria, p.126., Cf. Snyder: op.cit., p.91. Cf. Muirhead: op.cit., pp.76-77. N.B. Muirhead quotes freely from MS.C. pp.10-11. e.g. Muirhead has, "as rationally might I assert a tree to be a bird as Berkeley's perception to be sensation, which is but a minimum." The MS. reads "As rationally might I assert a Tree to be a Bud as Bishop Berkeley's Perception to be Sensation, which is itself but the minimum."

It was precisely at this point that Coleridge discovered the limits of Kant's transcendental analysis in the Critique.

"Considered as Logic, it is irrefragable:" he writes, "as philosophy it will be exempt from opposition and cease to be questionable only when the Soul of Aristotle shall have become one with the Soul of Plato, when the Men of Talent shall have all passed into Men of Genius or the Men of Genius have all sunk into Men of Talent. That is, Graecis Calendis or when two Fridays meet."¹

There is no mistaking the application. Kant's denial of the power of speculative reason to transcend the limits of the logical understanding is not acceptable to the Platonic mind of Coleridge. The failure of Kant is but one more proof of the inadequacy of the older logic.

Finally, the failure of the older logic results from the very assumption on which it rests. A dichotomous principle clearly drives a wedge between subject-object, real-unreal, real-ideal, actual-potential, universal-particular, unity-multiplicity and affirmative-negative. Everything is set in antithesis. Reconciliation of opposites is impossible on such a basis. But this is to contradict the very essence of reasoning which seeks unity, the reduction of the many to one. The mind demands identity, not independence; absoluteness not relativity.² Dichotomy, if adopted as "the legitimate

1. Logic, II, pp.329-330. Snyder: op.cit., p.125.

2. Cf. Walter Pater: Coleridge's Writings, p.8. Pater, taking his stand for a relativist philosophy, does not seem to grasp this.

and only form of distributive logic,"¹ has dire results. It

"excites, and seems to sanction this delusive conceit of Self-sufficiency in minds disposed to follow the clue of argument at all hazards, and whithersoever it threatens to lead them, if only they remain assured that the thread continues entire. And it is now my purpose to evince, that the inevitable result of all consequent reasoning, in which the speculative intellect refuses to acknowledge a higher or deeper ground than it can itself supply, is - and from Zeno the Eleatic to Spinoza ever has been - Pantheism, under one or other of its modes:"²

For Coleridge, the way of dichotomy is thus the way of disaster.

On the other hand, trichotomy offers a method directly opposed to both the ordinary and the critical logic. It starts not from two opposing concepts, but conceives of these as the twin poles of an underlying unity. The method of trichotomy is to

"seek first for the Unity as the only source of Reality, and then for the two opposite yet correspondent forms by which it manifests itself. For it is an axiom of universal application that manifestatio non datur nisi per alterum. Instead therefore of affirmation and contradiction, the tools of dichotomic Logic, we have the three terms Identity, Thesis, and Antithesis."³

If dichotomy proceeds by "exclusion," then trichotomy proceeds by "enlargement."⁴ The "enlargement" is not the result of mere fusion, but of inner development. Stressing this point, Coleridge claims that his own term "prothesis" is less confusing than "synthesis," in that it emphasizes identity rather than

1. MS.B. 3, p.38.

Cf. Snyder: op.cit., p.129.

2. MS.B. 3, p.38. Snyder: op. cit., p.129.

3. Marginal Note on Kant: Allgemeine Naturgeschichte, etc.
Printed in Muirhead: op.cit., p.86.

4. Anima Poetae, pp.168-169.

mere external union.¹

Coleridge's enthusiasm for the principle of trichotomy knew no bounds.² At times he extended it into a tetractys³ derived from Pythagoras, and again into a pentad.⁴ And again, he was prone to apply it to all sorts of subjects, This extravagance has led Wellek to say: "Coleridge himself does not seem to have understood the actual principle of the dialectic."⁵ It was not, however, merely a case of "an empty mysticism of numbers," as Wellek would infer, and Muirhead is more nearly correct when he writes of these "as belonging to the eccentricities rather than the essentials of his thought."⁶

His principle is closely akin to that of his contemporary, Hegel. That he came to it independently of the German thinker is a fact all the more to his credit."⁷

1. MS.H., pp.167-168.

This is illustrated by a note on a Sermon of Donne:-
It is not true that body plus soul makes man. Man is not the syntheton or composition of body and soul, as the two component units. No; man is the unit, the prothesis, and body and soul are the two poles,..... the thesis and antithesis of the man." (Notes on English Divines, I, pp.96-97.)

2. Vide Snyder: op.cit., p.71, for a partial list of references.
Cf. Snyder: The Critical Principle of the Reconciliation of Opposites as Employed by Coleridge.

3. Notes on English Divines, II, p.107.

4. Aids to Reflection, p. 288.

5. Wellek: op.cit., p.86.

6. Muirhead: op.cit., p.86n.

7. Cf. Muirhead: op.cit., pp.86-88. "He has the undoubted merit of being one of the first to recognize the importance of (such) a method."

His introduction to Hegel's writings came only late in his life, and, as far as can be judged, his knowledge of Hegel was confined to some ninety pages of the "Wissenschaft der Logik."¹ He charges him with "confusion of terms," resulting from the original error "of overbuilding the $\pi\rho\acute{o}\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ by the Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis."² This criticism indicates one point of difference between the two thinkers. Hegel stresses the ultimate synthesis, Coleridge the primary identity. Again, Coleridge feels at one point that Hegel has given expression to "Spinozism in it's superficial form.....It may explain a wave; but not a Leaf or an Insect."³ Whether this criticism be justified or not, it was sufficient to damn Hegel in Coleridge's eyes.⁴

But, if not from Hegel, whence did Coleridge derive his principle? Wellek claims that Schelling is the immediate source,⁵ but adduces no evidence in support of his contention. Again, it is clear that it is not derived from Kant, for Coleridge expressly denies that Kant discovered or had any true appreciation of its significance.⁶ He gives the

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1. British Museum Copy. Notes printed. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. pp. 162-165. The notes are of interest as the first real attempt on the part of an English thinker to grapple with the difficulties of the Hegelian dialectic. Cf. Muirhead: op.cit., p.87.
 2. Note on flyleaf - Snyder: op.cit., p.162.
 3. Note on p.89. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., p.165.
 4. Cf. Muirhead: op. cit., pp.87-88, where a fuller discussion of the notes occurs.
 5. Wellek: op.cit., p.86.
 6. Logic, II, pp.401-402. Cf. Snyder: op.cit., p.126.

credit for its discovery to Richard Baxter, who, a century before Kant, "saw far more deeply into the grounds, nature and necessity of this division as a Norma Philosophiae."¹ But the line of ancestry for the idea in Coleridge goes back beyond Baxter to Giordano Bruno's polar logic,² to Pythagoras,³ and to the dualism of the early Greeks, "first promulgated by Heraclitus."⁴ Whatever its source, the doctrine of trichotomy is, in fact, the logical statement of his essential principle of polarity. By it he felt able to bring "all problematic results to their solution, and reduce apparent contraries to correspondent opposites". It enabled him to contemplate "hostile tenets" as "fragments of truth, false only by negation and mutual exclusion."⁵

It was on this principle of trichotomy that Coleridge conceived it possible to develop his organon. As noetic, or the science of reason, it would transcend the limitations of ordinary logic, or the science of the understanding.

II. Reason and Understanding.

Underlying Coleridge's trichotomous principle of logic, and basic to his whole philosophy, is the "momentous

1. Logic II, pp.401-2. Cf. MS.B.3., p.38 note. Snyder: op.cit., pp.128-129.

Cf. Notes on English Divines, II, pp. 106-107.

Cf. Wellek: op.cit., pp.85-86, where the relevant passages are collected.

2. Notes on English Divines, II, p.107.

3. Ibid: II, p.107.

4. The Friend, p.57n.

5. Anima Poetae, p.301.

distinction" between reason and the understanding. He claimed that it is pre-eminently the Gradus ad Philosophiam.¹ It is, at any rate, in the case of Coleridge himself, the Gradus ad Philosophiam. In the Aids Coleridge does not hesitate to avow that

"on his success in establishing the validity and importance of the distinction between Reason and Understanding, he rests his hopes of carrying the reader along with him through all that is to follow."²

And elsewhere he writes,

"Let me by all the labors of my life have answered but one end, if I shall have only succeeded in establishing the diversity of Reason and Understanding, and the distinction between the Light of Reason in the Understanding.....and the Reason itself, as the source and birthplace of Ideas."³

The importance of the distinction in Coleridge's philosophy cannot be overestimated. "No question," writes Dr. Muirhead concisely, "goes deeper than that of its origin in his mind, the meaning he attached to it, and the relation of this meaning to that of the similar distinction in Kant."⁴

With regard to the first of these three points—the origin of the distinction in his mind — the critics are unanimous in finding the formal basis for it in Kant. Where they differ is in assessing the value of Kant's contribution to Coleridge's thought on this point. In the prospectus to The Friend Coleridge himself asserts that he is to uphold principles of philosophy "adopted by the great men of Europe from the

1. Table Talk, p.75. May 14, 1830.

2. Aids, p.145.

3. MS.C., p.33. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. p.135.

4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.65.

middle of the fifteenth till towards the close of the seventeenth century,"¹ and in the essay on reason and understanding he mentions Harrington, Hooker, Bacon, Hobbes, Shakespeare, and Milton as English writers in whom the distinction is found.² Jeremy Taylor,³ Leighton⁴ and John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist,⁵ are referred to elsewhere as drawing analogous distinctions.

On the other hand, Kantian colouring is seen throughout the whole of Coleridge's writings,⁶ and in The Friend, where the distinction is first noted in his published writings, direct reference is made to Kant.⁷ The conclusions of the critics may be noted. Howard, while his own argument points to the predominant influence of the Cambridge Platonists, nevertheless admits that it

"should not be forgotten that Coleridge felt deeply the need of this distinction in his own spiritual struggle, and it was to this that he was far more indebted than to either Kant or the Platonists."⁸

Muirhead's conclusion is similar: "All that Kant did in this case, as in others, was to confirm and give more definite form to what he had toiled out for himself."⁹ On the other hand, Wellek holds that "Coleridge could not have formulated the distinction as he did it, without Kant."¹⁰ He recognizes, however,

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1. The Friend, Appendix A., p.414.
 2. Ibid, pp.100-102.
 3. Iids, p.228.
 4. Ibid: p.153.
 5. Ibid: pp.167-168n.
 6. See Wellek: loc.cit.
 7. The Friend, p. 101.
 8. Howard: Coleridge's Idealism. p.68.
 9. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher. p.65.
 10. Wellek: op.cit., p.103.

the weight of Coleridge's own claims as he adds, "even if his interpretation of the distinction is closer to the meaning of the older writers."¹ From Kant, then, Coleridge derived the mould only. It became for him a fixed frame of reference. Into it he poured the content of his own experience and the results of his "oceanic reading."

The second question is of more importance - what did he mean by it? It is obvious at once that the distinction itself was subject to development in Coleridge's mind. In this it shared the fate and the fortune of all the elements in his thought. It is manifestly impossible, within the limits of this thesis, to trace this development in complete detail. It will be of interest to note the first discussion of the distinction as it occurs in the letter to Thomas Clarkson of Oct. 13, 1806,² and then to pass directly to the developed doctrine as found in the Aids and manuscript remains.

In the 1806 letter, the understanding is defined as "that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the notices of Experience.....all the mere *παρρησια* of our nature."³ Reason, on the other hand, is concerned with the *νοούμενα* - "all such notices, as are characterized by Universality and Necessity.....which are evidently not the effect of any Experience, but the condition of all Experience - that indeed without

1. Wellek: p.103.

2. Unpublished Letters, I, pp.352-360.

3. Ibid: I, p.359.

which Experience - itself would be inconceivable."¹ This contrast is continued in The Friend,² the Omniana of 1812,³ the 1816 Lay Sermon,⁴ and the Biographia Literaria⁵ of 1817. By the time of the Aids, the distinction was so firmly entrenched in Coleridge's thought that the whole book turns on the distinction. It recurs again and again in varying forms, the underlying meaning of which is, however, substantially the same.

Archbishop Leighton's definition of reason is accepted by Coleridge as the true definition of understanding - "the faculty judging according to sense."⁶ The understanding is discursive,⁷ the faculty of reflection,⁸ and of generalization.⁹ As the "comparing faculty" it contains certain inherent forms, "modes of reflecting not referable to the objects reflected on, but pre-determined by the constitution and (as it were) mechanism of the Understanding itself."¹⁰ These are constituent "because they are not acquired by the understanding, but are implied in its constitution."¹¹ One such form is that

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1. Unpublished Letters, I, p.359.
 2. First Landing Place, Essay V, pp.100-106.
 3. Table Talk & Omniana, pp.381-386.
 4. Biographia Literaria, Appendix, pp. 339 seg.
 5. Biographia Literaria, pp.96-97, 138.
N.B. for a summary of the passages in these works and their relation to Kant, see Wellek: op.cit., pp.102-107, 115-116.
 6. Aids, pp.143,144.
 7. Ibid: p.148.
 8. Ibid: p.148.
 9. Ibid: p.149.
 10. Ibid: p.149.
 11. Ibid: p.150n.

of causal conceptions.¹ Quantity and relation are "preconceptions" of the understanding. "Understanding in its highest form of experience remains commensurate with the experimental notices of the senses from which it is generalized."² Understanding forms notions, entia rationalia,³ but these become entia realia only "by Revelation, or the Law of Conscience, or the necessary interests of Morality."⁴

The understanding sees things in antithesis.

Truth comes forth

"out of the moulds of the Understanding only in the disguise of two contradictory conceptions, each of which is partially true, and the conjunction of both conceptions becomes the representative or expression (the exponent) of a truth beyond conception and inexpressible."⁵

The understanding is called the mind of the flesh.⁶

Coleridge further distinguishes between the understanding "as a mode and faculty of thought" - reflection - and the understanding "as a Principle of Action." In this latter sense, it is the "Adaptive Power" or "the faculty of selecting and adapting Means and medial of proximate ends."⁷

1. Aids, p.176n.

2. Ibid: p.154n.

3. Ibid: p.109.

4. Ibid: p.109. Cf. Wellek: op.cit., p.125. Wellek is wrong in stating that notions are converted into real objects by aid of the imagination. Coleridge claims such a process has "been the fruitful stock of empty theories, and mischievous superstitions, of surreptitious premises, and extravagant conclusions." (p.109).

5. Ibid: p.154n.

6. Ibid: p.158.

7. Ibid: p.277.

The understanding generalizes on the notices received from the senses "in order to the construction of names." It classifies by naming objects.¹

All this, as Wellek points out,² is reasonably close to Kant. It is in his use and meaning of reason that Coleridge breaks clear of the closely restricted faculty of Kant, and reveals his deep-rooted Platonism. As contrasted with understanding, reason is defined as "the Power of Universal and necessary Convictions, the Source and Substance of Truths above Sense, and having their evidence in themselves."³ It differs in kind from the understanding.⁴ If understanding is discursive, reason is fixed; if understanding refers all its judgments to some other faculty as its ultimate authority, reason appeals to itself; if understanding is the faculty of reflection, reason is that of contemplation.⁵ In this last reason is nearer to sense than to understanding.

Coleridge quotes Hooker with approval to the effect that reason is "a direct aspect of Truth, an inward Beholding, having a similar relation to the Intelligible or Spiritual, as SENSE has to the Material or Phenomenal."⁶ If understanding depends on the representations of the senses,

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1. Aids, p.153. N.B. Muirhead sums up Coleridge's Understanding admirably as "the whipping-boy of prudence in morality, reliance on mere external evidence in theology, and pure expediency in politics." (p.66n)
 2. Wellek: op.cit., p.125.
 3. Aids, p.143.
 4. Ibid: pp. 143,147,277-278.
 5. Ibid: p.148.
 6. Ibid: p.148.

reason "either predetermines Experience, or avails itself of a past Experience to supersede its necessity in all future time."¹ It affirms truths "which no sense could perceive, nor experiment verify, nor experience confirm."² This thoroughly Platonic idea is emphasized by the statement,

"There is an intuition or immediate Beholding accompanied by a conviction of the necessity and universality of the truth so beholden not derived from the senses, which intuition when it is construed by pure sense, gives birth to the Science of Mathematics, and when applied to objects supersensuous or spiritual is the organ of Theology and Philosophy."³

The knowledge of spiritual truth he holds to be "of necessity" immediate and intuitive, the nearest analogy being that of the natural man's intuitions of the pure sense, which are the subjects of mathematics.⁴

Understanding may give rise to rules and maxims; reason alone gives principles, distinguished by necessity⁵ and universality.⁶ Elsewhere, he writes of reason as the "Source of Principles," and the understanding as "the faculty of Rules." "The Reason is all end, summa finium, the Understanding all means, summa mediorum."⁷ In short, reason is the source of ideas. These ideas, "in their conversion to the responsible Will" become "ultimate ends."⁸

1. Aids, p.154n.

2. Ibid: p.154n.

3. Ibid: p.155n.

4. Ibid: p.104.

5. Ibid: p.143.

6. Ibid: p.155n.

7. Logic, II, p.35. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. p.110.

8. Aids, p.277n, note to second edition.

This leads to a consideration of the further distinction within reason between the speculative and the practical reason. When a truth of reason is applied to facts of experience or to the rules of the understanding, the "necessity" is conditional. It is absolute when the subject matter "is itself the growth or offspring of the Reason."¹

"Hence arises a distinction in the Reason itself, derived from the different mode of applying it, and from the objects to which it is directed: accordingly as we consider one and the same gift, now as the ground of formal principles, and now as the origin of ideas. Contemplated distinctively in reference to formal (or abstract) truth, it is the speculative reason; but in reference to actual (or moral) truth, as the fountain of ideas, and the light of the conscience, we name it the practical reason."²

In a note added to the second edition Coleridge pins his faith to the practical reason, as reason considered in relation to the will.

"The Practical Reason alone is Reason in the full and substantive sense. It is reason in its own sphere of perfect freedom; as the source of IDEAS, which Ideas, in their conversion to the responsible Will, become Ultimate Ends. On the other hand, Theoretic Reason, as the ground of the Universal and Absolute in all logical conclusion is rather the Light of Reason in the Understanding, and known to be such by its contrast with the contingency and particularity which characterize all the proper and indigenous growths of the Understanding."³

It is this emphasis on the will that carries Coleridge beyond Kant.⁴ It is seen in his identification of voûs, the Spirit, with the practical reason.⁵ It is seen

1. Aids, p.143.
2. Ibid, p.143.
3. Ibid, p.277n.
4. Vide Wellek: op. cit., pp.126-129.
5. Aids, p.86n.

more clearly in his statement that "the personal Will comprehends the idea, as a Reason, and it gives causative force to the Idea, as a practical Reason."¹ A further discussion of the distinction occurs in the Logic. Although written prior to the Aids, the Logic carries the distinction beyond his ordinary elaboration of the Platonic distinction between discursive and intuitive thought. In this, the Kantian triad of sense, understanding and reason is subjected to analysis. Sense normally spoken of in the published works as presenting the experience of objects from which understanding abstracts, becomes at times in the Logic "the common or neutral boundary" of objective and subjective,² - the undifferentiated background of experience.

Identity is dwelt upon.³ It is the understanding that drives the wedge between subject and object.

"When taking our point of view from the Understanding we divided all things into subject, object - we did not disguise ourselves that something far higher was presupposed which was neither subject singly nor object nor a conjunction of both by adding the one to the other: but the identity of both, their common root."⁴

In this sphere of identity,

"the antithesis of the analytic and synthetic disappears likewise and loses all import: for it rises out of the forms of Understanding and of the Sense, that are instruments for the knowledge of true relations and relative not absolute truth, which latter appertains to a higher principle."⁵

1. Aids, p.202n.

2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.66.

3. Logic, II, p.73. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic, etc.pp.79-80.

4. Logic, II, p.226. Wellek: op.cit., p.121.

5. Logic, II, p.326. Wellek: op.cit., p.121.

In addition to its divisive quality, the understanding is a substantiating power, "that by which we give and attribute substance and reality to phenomena, and raise them from mere affections and appearances into objects communicable and capable of being anticipated and reasoned about."¹ Thought thus enters into all experience. "Points, lines, surfaces are not bodies but acts of the minds, the offspring of intellectual motions, having their canons in the imagination of the geometrician."² The caution is offered that although we may speak thus of all objects of the understanding as entia logica, they are not necessarily entia realia.³

This receives emphasis in his discussion of the Kantian doctrines of space and time as a priori forms of sense, and of the categories as a priori principles of unity. The act of the understanding, as a function of this a priori unity, results merely in an ens logicum.

"By generalizing a continuous act or series of acts essentially the same and then contemplating this generality as a unity, we form the notion of a power. A power has no scientific sense, no philosophic Genesis or Derivation, where it is not coincident and commutable with a law or introduced confessedly as the surrogate or substitute of a Law not yet discovered - an Ens logicum to be reasoned with not to be reasoned from."⁴

Understanding, concerned with phenomena, can never reach beyond to the unity towards which sense points.

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1. Logic, II, p.39. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher., p.67. Cf. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. p.101.
 2. Logic, II, p.396. Muirhead: op.cit., p.67. Cf. Aids, p.109.
 3. Logic, II, p.396. Snyder: op.cit., p.101.
 4. Logic, II, p.39. Wellek: op.cit., p.122.

It is in and by reason alone that this is reached.¹ The ideas, disclosed by reason, are transcendent to the conceptions, offered by understanding. Reason is universal, "undividual (sic) and transcendent."² In a true sense, then, the data of the understanding may be "considered as the offspring of a higher source which for distinction's sake we named the Reason."³

Finally, with regard to Muirhead's third point - the relation of the distinction between reason and understanding in Coleridge to that in Kant - enough has been said already to indicate how far Coleridge was prepared to go beyond the German philosopher. Coleridge accepted in the main the positive side of Kant's teaching, that the mind is an active element in all experience; that there must be a "mental antecedent," as he calls it in The Friend,⁴ to experience; and that the forms of thought are valid only within the limits of that experience. But he declined to follow him in denying the possibility of knowing the real world beyond the world of ordinary sensory experience and leaving thus a fundamental dualism.

Even on the positive side, as Muirhead has shown,⁵ Coleridge was prepared to criticize Kant, as failing to do justice to the relation of the sense-experiences to the forms of the understanding, and leaving as the test of truth a "previously manufactured" something of the conceptive faculty. The

1. Cf. The Aids, p. 111, where fancy is opposed to imagination in the same way as reason to understanding. "The notion may have its mould in the understanding; but its realization must be the wish of the FANCY."

2. Logic, II, p.40. Wellek: op.cit., p.123.

3. Logic, II, p.410. Wellek: op.cit., p.123.

4. The Friend, p.361.

5. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher. pp.91-96.

criticism occurs early in the record of his first reactions to the Critique.¹

"How, he asks, "can that be called a mannigfaltiges Σλν which yet contains in itself the ground why I apply one category to it rather than another? The mind does not resemble an Aeolian harp, not even a barrel-organ turned by a stream of water, conceived as many tunes mechanized in it as you like, but rather, as far as objects are concerned, a violin or other instrument of few strings yet vast compass, played on by a musician of Genius. The Breeze that blows across the Aeolian harp, the stream that turns the handle of the barrel organ, might be called a mannigfaltiges, a mere sylva incondita, but who would call the muscles and purpose of Linley a confused manifold?"²

The "perpetual and unmoving cloud of darkness", which he finds hangs over Kant, he attributes to

"The absence of any clear account of Was ist Erfahrung? What do you mean by a fact, an empiric reality, which alone can give solidity (Inhalt) to our Conceptions? It seems from many passages, that this indispensable Test is itself previously manufactured by this very conceptive Power, - and that the whole not of our own making is the mere sensation of a mere manifold - in short, mere influx of motion, to use a physical metaphor. I apply the categoric forms to a Tree - well! but first, what is this Tree? How do I come by this Tree?"³

The same weakness underlies Kant's analysis of judgment which leaves a chasm between subject and object.⁴ Both sense and reason point, however, to a primary unity,⁵ some underlying ground-reality which is the basis for both subject and object, percipient and perceived world. Mind as we know it points to the bridge, as it as subject is also its own object. But mind again as we know it is not self-subsistent. Some

1. Entitled, "Struggles felt not arguments objected."
2. Kant: Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Ottery St. Mary Marginalia I, printed Nidecker: Revue de litterature comparée, VII, pp.529-530. (Linley:- Thos. Linley, The violinist 1756-1778.)
3. Ibid.
4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher pp.72-81. Cf. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc. p.125.
5. Snyder: op.cit., p.88.

ultimate ground must therefore be sought. "What," he asks in The Friend, "is the ground of the coincidence between reason and experience? Or between the laws of matter and the ideas of the pure intellect?"¹ The answer given is that of Plato, which

"compels the reason to pass out of itself and seek the ground of this agreement in a supersensual essence, which being at once the ideal of the reason and the cause of the material world, is the pre-establisher of the harmony in and between both."²

It remains to consider the nature of this ground to which reason points.

III. Metaphysics.

"The grand problem," Coleridge wrote in The Friend, "the solution of which forms, according to Plato, the final object and distinctive character of philosophy, is this: for all that exists conditionally (i.e. the existence of which is inconceivable except under the condition of its dependency on some other as its antecedent) to find a ground that is unconditional and absolute, and thereby to reduce the aggregate of human knowledge to a system."³

The solution of the problem, according to Coleridge, is to be sought in the doctrine of ideas.

(a) The Meaning of Ideas.

If the "momentous distinction" between reason and understanding carries us to the heart of Coleridge's philosophy, then in his doctrine of ideas we are at the heart itself. All the labours of his life, he tells us, were to establish the

1. The Friend, Section II, Essay 5, p.327.
 2. Ibid, p.328. MS.B. 3. p.157.
 3. Ibid: p.326.

diversity of reason and understanding, and the distinction between the light of reason in the understanding and reason itself, "as the source and birth-place of Ideas." His end will then have been accomplished. Further, by this, he hoped to have taught

"as many as have in themselves the conditions of learning the true import and legitimate use of the term, Idea, and directed the nobler and loftier minds of the rising Generation to the incalculable Value of Ideas (and therefore of Philosophy which is but another name for the manifestation and application of Ideas) in all departments of Knowledge, not merely technical and mechanic, and their indispensable presence in the Sciences that have a worth as well as a Value to the Naturalist no less than to the Theologian, to the Statesman no less than to the Moralist."¹

If philosophy be "but another name for the manifestation and application of Ideas", what was the "true import and legitimate use" of the term that Coleridge had in mind? In two long entries in the Semina Rerum,² from one of which the above quotation is taken, Coleridge attempts to answer the question directly. An idea may be contemplated, it cannot be conceived. To ask for a conception of an idea is, if possible, even more irrational than to ask for "the Image of a Flavor or the odour of a Strain of Music."³ "For," as he says, "between the harmonies of sight and sound there is at least an analogy; but Ideas and Conceptions are utterly disparate, and Ideas and Images the negatives of each other."⁴ Even language is inadequate to express the meaning⁵ since words are "the creatures,

1. MS.C, p.33 seq. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., p.135.

2. Ibid: pp.25-26, 33 seq.

3. Ibid: p.35.

4. Ibid: p.25.

5. Ibid: Cf. MS.H, where he rejects the analogy of mathematical intuition - the appeal of the Cambridge Platonists - as being too closely dependent on sense. Vide infra "The Idea of God."

instruments, and immediate Objects of the Understanding."

There is left the possibility of attempting to define an idea; first, negatively, by contra-distinction - "by determining what an idea is not;" second, positively, by marking "some character common to all Ideas;" and third, "by referring to some Instance."

Negatively, an idea is distinguished by the fact that it is not an image of the fancy, nor is it a conception - the product of the understanding.¹ Again, ideas are distinguished from "schematized" conceptions or theories.² Theories are subject to change and are conditioned by new discovery, as in the field of astronomy and chemistry.³

Positively, ideas may be defined by reference to "some character common to all," such as the relation of particular and universal seen in natural law.⁴ A law is not merely "a synopsis of a plurality of phaenomena," it is "constitutive" of them, and "in order of Thought necessarily antecedent."⁵ The idea is "the Correlative and mental Counterpart of the Law."⁶ Thirdly, by reference to concrete examples, the meaning of ideas may be determined. In the manuscript note he refers to astronomical and chemical laws, and in his Preliminary Treatise on Method to the laws of electricity and the

1. Cf. Aids, p.154n. Cf. Table Talk, p.64n.

2. MS.C, pp.35-38. Snyder, Coleridge on Logic etc., p.136. Cf. Preliminary Treatise on Method, p.4.

3. MS.C, pp.35-38. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., p.137.

4. Ibid: pp.35-38. Snyder: op.cit, p.136. Cf. Preliminary Treatise on Method, pp.4-11.

5. Ibid: pp.35-38.

6. Ibid: pp.35-38.

ideas governing the biological sciences.¹ Literature and life furnish further examples. Shakespeare is cited as an example of the "happy union of the universal with the particular." Shakespeare "studied mankind in the idea of the human race." Life, which he defines as "the principle of individuation" with the power of organization from within, is a favourite illustration as is seen from his essay on The Theory of Life.² Further, there is a "directing idea" of human history, the aim of which is "to weave a Chain of Necessity, the particular Links in which are free acts."³

A deeper question, however, remains to be answered. If the idea be not given by the senses, nor derived by induction, how then does the idea appear in the minds of men? There is, on the one hand, the Lockean solution of innateness, but this Coleridge rejects.⁴ Coleridge holds that the idea is apprehended by the reason.⁵ That is to say, ideas are made known to the "total man."⁶ They are "those truths namely (supposing such to exist) the knowledge and acknowledgment of which require the whole man, the free will, no less than the intellect, and which are not therefore merely speculative, nor yet merely practical, but both in one."⁷ Hence, this "grasp" of the meaning of experience is something which "no man can

1. Preliminary Treatise on Method, pp.17-24.

2. Miscellanies, p.385. Cf. Table Talk, pp.56-57.

3. MS.C, p.39. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., p.137.
Cf. Preliminary Treatise on Method, p.47. Cf. Church and State, p.5

4. Vide infra, "The Idea of God."

5. Aids, p.148. Vide supra, "Reason and Understanding."

6. Cf. Richards: Coleridge on Imagination, p. 138 seq.

7. Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., pp.100-101.

give to another, yet every man may find for himself.¹

(b) The Idea of Will.

Since ideas are "found" by each man, the starting point for inquiry concerning the first idea, the "idea idearum"² in the light of which, as the ground of all reality, all other ideas must be seen, must be the man himself. Self-consciousness is not only the "fixed point" of departure, it furnishes also the clue to causality and hence to ultimate reality.

"We can never pass beyond the principle of self-consciousness. Should we attempt it, we must be driven back from ground to ground, each of which would cease to be a ground the moment we pressed on it. We must be whirled down the gulf of an infinite series. But this would make our reason baffle the end and purpose of all reason, namely, unity and sytem. Or we must break off the series arbitrarily, and affirm an absolute something that is in and of itself at once cause and effect, causa sui."³

The only thing of which we know that is causa sui, at once cause and effect, subject and object, is self-consciousness. And the basis of self-consciousness is will.⁴ Mechanical power supposes spirit or will, he argues at length in the manuscript Opus.⁵ Will, therefore, is basic. It alone is capable of originating,⁶ and causative of reality.⁷

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1. Aids, p.90. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.96-102. for a fuller treatment.
 2. Cf. Muirhead: op.cit. p.102.
 3. Biographia Literaria, p.133. Cf. Muirhead; op.cit. p.103 seq. for fuller treatment.
 4. Ibid: p.132. Vide supra. Spirit, Will and Personality.
 5. MS.B. 1, pp.24-36.
 6. MS.B. 2, p.25.
 7. MS.B. 3, p.170.

No other definition of will is possible but "verbally, that which originates, and really, that which is essentially causative of reality."¹ This leads to the idea of the Absolute Will, the first idea. Coleridge states, in the manuscript Opus, "An absolute Will, which therefore is essentially causative of reality, and therefore in origin causative of its own reality, the essential causativeness however abiding undiminished and indiminishable, this is our first idea."² There is this to be said of the Absolute Will. As anterior to all, will supports being. The idea of will is necessary to the idea of being and the idea of being is contained in the idea of will. They are not however the same.³ Moreover, the Absolute Will must be intelligent.

"The Supreme Will," he writes in the Huntington manuscript, "is an idea incapable of abstraction. We not only cannot think of it abstracted from Intelligence and Love as real - for this would apply equally to the idea of an unbounded power; but we cannot think of it at all."⁴

Temporal relations do not apply to the idea of the Absolute Will. In the Opus Maximum chapter on "Ideas flowing out of the Divine Personēity," Coleridge devotes some space to a discussion of this question.⁵ The discussion hinges upon the familiar distinction between reason and understanding. The understanding deals only with the things of sense. It

1. MS.B.3, p.240.

2. Ibid, p.242. Cf. MS.B.2, p.27.

3. Ibid, pp.239-240. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.112.

4. MS.H, pp.110-111. Cf. infra. "The Doctrine of the Trinity."

5. MS.B.3, pp.213-245. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp. 112-113.

measures and arranges, but this does not cover all of experience. It is absurd to ask "whether Anthony's love of Cleopatra was north-west or south-east of his respect for Octavia!"¹ But if this absurdity be recognized, then "there must exist a class of truths to which the measures of time and space and the forms of quantity, quality and contingent relations are not applicable."² This class of truths come under the head of "Spirit."

The idea of time is necessary in the conception of a causal series. But the succession itself argues "a something that acting successively remains the same throughout the succession." This something is the ground and condition of time and space. It is eternity.³ Time, therefore, must be brought into some relation to eternity. Difficulty arises in applying the accidents of time to an eternal. A semblance either of a contradiction or of an argument in a circle appears.⁴ But this argument in a circle is necessarily the only starting-point. By the constitution of our own conscious understanding, and by the very act of reflexion, "which is for us the power

1. MS.B.3, p.215.

2. Ibid: printed in Snyder: Coleridge on Logic etc., p.132.

3. Ibid: pp.215-219.

4. Coleridge has a note on "successive" at this point which shows the close relation between time and consciousness in his thought. "But then this succession of thought, this still recurring resistance, as it were, to the continuous going forth of our being, which forces us backward, as it were, to our center, the result of which is the consciousness of the power resisting, constitutes Time for us; so that the conscious subject, the intelligible I in every man, as compared with that of which he becomes conscious, may without extravagance be represented as time in relation to space." MS.B.3, pp.219-220.

and the condition of time," we are compelled "to attribute the relations of cause and effect improperly, and to a transcendent subject, in order that we may have any reality to which the relations of cause and effect in their proper sense can be applied."¹

The supreme idea is God. Hence, "the first great truth, which all men hold implicitly and which it is the highest object and duty of education to render explicit, is comprized in the term God."² He is self-existent and pure spirit. In the language of the Schoolmen, Deus est actus purissimus.³ Now, Coleridge holds in a significant passage,

"if we join the two positions of self-existence and Spirit, there arises that unique idea, which can belong but to one subject, and can therefore be elucidated by no analogy, that the Fathers and the School Divines have struggled to express by the terms αὐτοπαύτης and causa sui, but which is both more sublimely and more adequately conveyed in the Hebrew words, 'I am in that I am' or rather, in the literal translation of the words, 'That which I will to be I shall be.'"⁴

Nothing illustrates more clearly the religious bearing of Coleridge's philosophy than this statement regarding the Supreme Idea. It is will. It is God. The Absolute Will of speculation is identified with the God of religion.

(c) Ideas and Reality.

"Whether ideas are regulative only," he wrote in

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1. MS.B.3, p.221.
 2. Ibid, p.224.
 3. Ibid, p.224.
 4. Ibid, pp.224-225.

the Appendix to the first Lay Sermon, "or likewise constitutive, and one with the power and life of Nature.....is the highest problem of philosophy."¹ The first was the position of Aristotle and of Kant. But for Coleridge, as for Plato, the idea is constitutive of reality. In defining faith as an act of fidelity,² Coleridge affirms:-

"this is at once the distinctive and constitutive basis of my philosophy - that I place my first principle, the ground and genesis of my system, not as others in a fact impressed, much less in a generalization from facts collectively, and least of all from an abstraction embodied into an hypothesis in which the pretended solution is most often but a repetition of the problem in disguise, a mere abbreviation of the thing to be solved. In contradistinction from this I place my principle in an act, in the language of grammarians I begin with the verb, but the act involves its reality - it is an act of being, a verb substantive."³

How to prove that the act involves its reality is the crucial question. The core of his trichotomous logic was to show that the passage to the noumenal world was possible. And the burden of his elaborate distinction between reason and understanding was to make plain the way. He holds, therefore, that the logical principle on which to base the true speculative argument is: "Whatever is real must be possible and therefore whatever is necessary in order to the possibility of a reality must be itself both possible and real."⁴ In the manuscript chapter on "Faith and Conscience" the way is made even

1. The Statesman's Manual, appendix E, Biog. Lit., p.367.

2. Vide infra. Faith and Conscience.

3. MS.B.2, pp.134-136. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.105, quoted freely, wrong reference.

4. Ibid, p.30. Vide Muirhead: op. cit., pp.105-110 for a full discussion of this with relation to Plotinus.

clearer.

"From whichever of the two points the Reason may start, from the Things that are seen to the One Invisible, or from the idea of the Absolute One to the Things that are seen, it will find a Chasm, which the Moral Being only, which the Spirit and Religion of man alone can fill up or over-bridge."¹

Coleridge's spiritual realism thus points the way beyond the dualism of Kant. The final ground of reality is God. He is "at once the constitutive will and the supreme reason of the universe."²

"The fact, therefore, that the mind of man, in its own primary and constituent forms, represents the laws of nature, is a mystery which of itself should suffice to make us religious: for it is a problem of which God is the only solution - God, the One before all, and of all, and through all!"³

"Religion, therefore," as he states in The Friend, "is the ultimate aim of philosophy."⁴ It is, at any rate, the ultimate aim of Coleridge's philosophy.⁵

1. MS.B.3, pp.38-39.

2. Statesman's Manual, Appendix A, Biog. Lit., p.336.

3. Ibid: Appendix C, p.347. Quoted freely Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.109.

4. The Friend, Section II, Essay V, p.328

5. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.110-117 re Coleridge's "Theological Platonism."

CHAPTER V.

Faith and Conscience.

I. Faith and Conscience.

Although epistemology runs back ultimately into metaphysics, it is generally recognized that some discussion of the nature and validity of knowledge should precede the full consideration of the ultimate problems of a religious philosophy. It would seem, at first sight, that Coleridge had done full justice to the problems of epistemology in his treatment of the distinction between reason and understanding. But that even his constant emphasis on this "momentous distinction" did not exhaust all he had to say on the subject, is seen by the presence in the manuscript Opus of a complete chapter bearing the title, "Faith and Conscience." It is a further study from another standpoint of the same basic problem.

Its position is of interest, as it is found immediately preceding the chapter, "On the existential reality of the Idea of the Supreme Being: i.e. of God."¹ Prior then to the discussion of "the existential reality" of God

1. MS.B.3, p.25.

Coleridge devotes considerable space to an analysis of "Faith and Conscience."¹ The position of the chapter in relation to those sections which it follows in the manuscript Opus is also of interest. The object of the work, he tells us, consists in the assertion, "first: of Religion as implying revelation....secondly: that Christianity is the only revelation of universal validity."² As the common creed of Christendom he states four articles: first, the necessity and actual existence of a spiritual redemption for man; second, the necessity of a regeneration in order to the susceptibility of being redeemed; third, the necessity of faith, in each individual, in order to his appropriation of this faith; and fourth, the fruits of the faith as the test and criterion of its existence.³ Now, Coleridge argues, in all reasoning the argument must commence with some assumption "which is supposed and may be demanded," but cannot

1. MS.B.2, pp.106-151. - MS.B.3, pp. 1-25.

The section appears to be an expanded version of the familiar Essay on Faith, (Aids, pp.341-349. Cf. Notes Theological, Political & Miscellaneous, pp.384-395.) first published in the Literary Remains of 1838-1839. (Vol. IV, p.425) A third version is also extant, preserved in the British Museum. (Egerton MS.2801, folios 217-221) It is probable that Henry Nelson Coleridge published his version by editing the fragment now in the British Museum. On this assumption the differences between these two versions may be accounted for readily. Except at one or two points, they are of no significant importance. It is probable also that the British Museum fragment is the original, written by Coleridge, and used by him when dictating the expanded version now to be found in the Opus Maximum.

2. MS.B.2, p.85. Cf. Aids, p.103.

3. MS.B.2, p.91.

be proved. In sciences such as geometry the denial of the postulate proves only "the conscious falsehood or jest" of the denier. It is otherwise in the moral world.

"The assumptions of morality it is in a man's power to reject believably without the absolute forfeiture of his human understanding, though not without forfeiting that which even more than the understanding forms the contradistinction of the human from the bestial nature."¹

What this distinction is becomes apparent in his primary postulate.

The primary "postulate of humanity" is the existence of the will. As the postulate of humanity, it is a fortiori the postulate of every code of religion and morality. "Man is a responsible agent and in consequence hath a will."² This postulate, Coleridge holds, is the same as that of moral responsibility, and that again is equivalent to the reality and essential difference of moral good and evil.³ He devotes some space to defining will as distinct from instinct, tendency, propensity and spontaneity. It cannot indeed be an object of conception.⁴ Responsible will is a fact.

"The fact then with the demand of which we commence our investigation is the existence of conscious responsibility and of its existence every conscious and rational Being must himself be the judge, the consciousness being the only organ by which it can be directly known."⁵

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1. MS.B.2, p.93
 2. Ibid, p.93. Cf. Aids, p.91.
 3. Ibid, pp.1-14.
 4. Ibid, p.27.
 5. Ibid, p.31.

"But," adds Coleridge, "the consciousness of a conscience is itself conscience."¹ From this basic postulate of conscience Coleridge proceeds to an acute criticism of utilitarian ethics which leads into a discussion of faith, "as the ground of all particular acts of willing."²

In the first instance, faith is defined as "fidelity to our own being, as far as such being is not, and cannot be, an object of the senses."³ By "clear inference" this fidelity is extended to being universally "as far as the same is not the object of the senses and herewith to whatever is necessarily affirmed or understood as the condition, concomitant or consequence of the same."⁴ This Coleridge illustrates by citing the categorical imperative; a fact, "of which I am no less conscious and.....no less assured than I am of any appearance presented to my mind by my outward senses;" a fact, "the ignorance of which establishes the non-personality of the ignorant or the guilt, and that in the latter case the ignorance.....is equivalent to knowledge wilfully darkened."⁵ Conscience is distinguished from all other acts of consciousness by its universality.⁶ It is the only practical contradistinction between men and animals. It is not a mode of consciousness,⁷ but presupposed

1. MS.B.2, p.31.

2. Ibid; p.72.

3. Ibid: p.108.

4. Ibid: p.108. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.341.

5. Ibid: pp.109-110. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.341.

6. Ibid: p.111.

7. Ibid: p.138.

in it. It is - and this is Coleridge's basic principle - the ground of consciousness, "the root and precondition of all other consciousness."¹ It is "anterior...to it in the order of thought, i.e., without reference to time."²

Conscience, then, has underived, and unconditional authority. It gives "legislative force and sanction" to the dicta of reason. It is "the true ultimate why and wherefore of all other things within the sphere of morals and the practical reason."³ This he illustrates by a discussion of the ethical systems based on self-regard from the standpoint of the categorical imperative and the standpoint of naturalism. To the school of naturalism he concedes that all actions and the impulses thereof, as distinguished from the motives, proceed from self. But he denies that every action necessarily proceeds to self.⁴ And this is a fact "of which every honest man is as fully assured as he is of his seeing, hearing or smelling."⁵ The difference between the two is that in the one case the senses are morally passive, while in the other the conscience is connected with the will, although it may become blurred through habitual choice, becoming then "a mere product of the will mechanized wilfully into a habit."⁶ The senses are receptive and present

1. MS.B.2, p.111. (Not in Essay.)

2. Ibid, p.111.

3. Ibid, p.112.

4. Ibid, pp.111-124. (Not in Essay.)

5. Ibid, p.124. N.B. In other words, Coleridge not only makes his postulate the foundation, he attempts to "anchor" the foundation solidly.

6. Ibid, p.126.

impressions, the conscience is active and presents commands or dictates. "In the facts of the conscience we are not only agents but it is by these alone that we know ourselves to be such."¹ The consciousness of responsibility and its proof is afforded by the inward assurance that regret and remorse are diverse in kind.²

The first principle of his philosophy, Coleridge holds, is placed in an act, an act of being.³ The act is an act "in which and by which we take upon ourselves an allegiance, and consequently the obligations of fealty."⁴ This fealty, implying the power of being unfaithful, is the primary and fundamental meaning of faith. In this sense faith is the commencement and indispensable pre-condition of all experience.

This leads at once into a discussion of consciousness and self-consciousness.⁵ Men are distinguished from animals, who are scious, by being conscious. But on examination: first, consciousness is found to depend on self-consciousness; second, self-consciousness involves the consciousness of another than self. The relation between "things" in the first and third persons depends on the primary relation between "things" in the first and second persons. "There can be no He without a previous Thou." Again, there could be no distinct sense of the term I, "as far as the

1. MS.B.2, p.128. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.342.

2. Ibid, p.130.

3. Ibid, pp.134-136. (Not in Essay.)

4. Ibid, p.134. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.343.

5. Ibid, pp.138 seq.

consciousness is concerned" without a thou.¹ The I exists wholly in consciousness, not in some subliminal soul.² Third, if there can be no he or it without an I, and no I without a thou, the "solution of the problem must be sought for in the genesis or origination of the Thou."³ Attempting the solution, he holds that the consciousness expressed in the term thou is only possible by an equation in which I is taken as equal to, but not the same as, thou. This is possible only by placing I and thou in opposition as correspondent opposites or correlatives, that is to say, by assigning them equal rights. I and thou are not "sames" and indistinguishable. The difference consists in will, which is affirmed in the one and

1. MS.B.2, p.143. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.343.

2. Ibid, p.143. (Not in Essay.)

N.B. The relation between the I and the IT is confused in the Essay. The Opus Maximum reads, "There could be no He without a previous Thou, and I scarcely need add that without a Thou there could be no opposite, and of course no distinct or conscious sense of the term I, as far as the consciousness is concerned without a Thou. But whatever may be affirmed or believed respecting the soul as a substratum or hypostases of the Self, the I exists wholly in consciousness. Much less then would the neuter pronoun it exist for us except as it exists during the suspension of the Will, as in dreams or states analogous thereto, and I may be permitted to observe in transita that the clearest conception I can form respecting the nature of beasts, of course conjectural at best, is to regard them as somnambulists:" (pp.143-144.) The Essay version reads: "There can be no He without a previous Thou. Much less could an I exist for us, except as it exists during the suspension of the will, as in dreams; and the nature of brutes may be best understood by considering them as somnambulists." (Aids, p.343.) The Opus Maximum version is obviously the correct one, in this instance.

3. MS.B.2, p.144 (Not in Essay.)

negatived in the other. There is no application or intervention of the will in the affirmation of the I, that is "the identification of the subject and object in which self-consciousness consists."¹ But there is an application of the will when we equate thou with I by means of a free act "by which we negative the sameness in order to establish the equality."² Fourth, the "becoming conscious of a conscience" thus partakes of the nature of an act. Finally, this equation of thou and I constitutes "the true definition of conscience."³

From this I-thou relation, the I-you, I-they relations follow, since "the plural presupposes the singular."⁴ Now all of these relations conjointly constitute the materials and subjects of consciousness, which in turn are the conditions of experience. Coleridge concludes this section with his Q.E.D.:

"It is evident that conscience is the root of all human consciousness, and à fortiori, the pre-condition of all experience, and therefore that the conscience in its first revelation cannot have been deduced from experience."⁵

Coleridge comes now to his second meaning of faith. Conscience may be underived from experience; it is not independent of it. Experience is enough to convince any man of the powers and impulses ready to usurp the throne of conscience and demand allegiance. Some of these must be

1. MS.B.2, pp.145-146. (Not in Essay.)
2. Ibid; p.146. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344.
3. Ibid; p.146. N.B. Coleridge puts this into his characteristic mould. I-Will is thesis. I+Will: Antithesis = Thou.
4. Ibid: p.146.
5. Ibid: p.151. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344.

repelled and utterly excluded, others must be subjugated, like "the beasts of burthen," and others still, such as social tendencies and affections, must be subordinated. The preservation of loyalty to the conscience against all these rivals constitutes the second sense of faith.¹ "Faith is fidelity; but all human fidelity that is consistent with itself is fidelity to the conscience."²

This fidelity to the sole supremacy of the conscience demands a consideration of the objects in which conscience is to be manifested and a full recognition of what its competitors are. This leads to a further analysis of the I-thou correlative relation, in the determination of "what is presupposed in the human conscience."³ Coleridge throws the problem into a more or less mathematical form: $I = A - Z$ and $Thou = A + Z$ (where $Z =$ the will). It then appears that the reason, or the universal, in each individual man, "without which he would not be man," is the factor to be taken as $-Z$, or "not the subject of will," as in the perception of mathematical truth.⁴ On the other hand, the factor to be taken as $+ Z$ "can be no other than the Will itself, but as the individual Will, or the Will considered as the principle of personality and free-agency."⁵ This means the virtual identity

1. MS.B.2, p.150. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344.

2. Ibid: p.150. (Not in Essay.)

3. Ibid: p.151. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344.

4. Ibid: p.151. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344.

5. MS.B.3, p.1. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.344, slightly different.

of the will and the reason. But the equations suppose equality, not identity.

The only solution is to take the will as the Absolute Will. "We may then without anticipation affirm that the identity of the Absolute Will and the Universal Reason is peculiar to the idea of God."¹ To transpose this statement into the human "analogon," Coleridge calls into service his polar logic.

"What in God is the reality or necessary co-inherence of the Absolute Will and the Reason subsists in man as the possible, either realized or realizable, synthesis of the individual will and the common or universal reason, by the subordination of the former to the latter."²

Only in God do both factors exist "each in the other," - as prothesis. In man the analogous factors appear distinct - as thesis and antithesis. Only by a deliberate and "continued" act of subordinating the one to the other - uniting them in a synthesis - does man complete the analogon.³ By this argument Coleridge claims that, antecedent to the question whether reason makes it necessary to affirm reality of the idea of God, certain conclusions appear to have the sanction of reason.

In the first place there is the idea, and the idea is unique, "not composed by any processes of imaginary comparison or arbitrary assertion of indefinite intensity or

1. MS.B.3, p.2. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.345.

2. Ibid: p.2. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.345

3. Ibid: p.3. (Not in Essay.)

magnitude."¹ Secondly, if we assume the existence of the Supreme Being, "it is by affirming reality of this idea exclusively that we can attach any rational meaning to the term God, or to the position God is, and exists."² Thirdly, this idea is the canon and criterion "by which the character and legitimacy of whatever is offered to us as representing or proceeding from God" is to be judged.³ Fourthly, the reality of the idea (i.e., the existence of God) being conceded, "reason itself obliges us to conclude that God-likenessmust be the proper character of man."⁴ This character is not self-existent, however. It depends on the individual will. If given originally, it must have been given to some other will as "the inceptive momentum or condition" of its continuance by the individual will. This proper character, therefore, may be lost. If lost, of which the fact itself is the proof, restoration to his proper character must be the "proper duty, the moral destination of man."⁵

This gives the "conditions" of religion, determinable while still within the limits of pure reason, and of ideas, "the reality of which is still problematic." Prior to the question of whether a true religion exists, he claims to have determined "what it must be and what it cannot be," and to have verified his definition of religion as

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1. MS.B.3; p.3. (Not in Essay.)
 2. Ibid; p.4. (Not in Essay.)
 3. Ibid: p.4. (Not in Essay.)
 4. Ibid: p.5. (Not in Essay.)
 5. Ibid: pp.5-6. (Not in Essay.)

differing from both philosophy and history by being both.¹

Reason in man is thus seen as the representative of the will of God. Conscience is the "specific witnessing" respecting the unity or harmony of the will with the reason; the harmony being effected by the self-subordination of the individual will, representing the self, to the reason, "as the representative of the will of God."²

Difficulty arises from the fact that the will is a factor in other moral "syntheses," such as sensuality, or the union of appetite and the personal will, and ambition, the union of the lust for power and the will. The specific character of conscience cannot therefore be found in the individual will. It must be found in reason. "Such as the nature and objects of the reason are, such must be the functions and objects of the conscience."³ This leads to a consideration of "the nature and objects" of reason, based on an analysis of "the total man," as revealing those constituents either contrary to, or disparate from, reason.⁴

The constituents of the total man, "contrary to or disparate from" the reason, are grouped under five heads.⁵ First, reason as supersensual is opposed by appetite, "the lust of the flesh" Second, as supersensuous, it is opposed by the senses, inward and outward, "the lust of the

1. MS.B.3, p.6. (Not in Essay.)

2. Ibid: p.7. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.345.

3. Ibid; p.8. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.345.

4. Ibid: p.8. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.345.

5. Ibid: pp.8-17. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, pp.345-348.

eye." Third, as superfinite, the representative of the infinite reason is opposed by the faculty of the finite, the un-ordinated understanding, the *φρόνημα σαρκός* of St. Paul, the wisdom of this world.¹ Fourth, as the representative of the will of God, reason stands in opposition to all mere individual wills, seeking an object "in the manifestation of itself for itself, in short, "the lust of the will." Fifth,² reason appears as the love of God and stands in opposition to earthly love, when such attachment is "in diminution of, or competition with, the love which is one with reason."³

Recapitulating the argument from this analysis, faith is, in the first or most universal sense, fidelity. But fidelity under previous contract or particular moral obligation is fealty. Faith, then, is fealty. Fealty to a rightful superior is allegiance. Therefore, in the third place, faith is allegiance. Fourthly, it is allegiance in active service, fidelity to the acknowledged lord "amid the temptations of usurpation, rebellion and intestine discord." Fifthly, it is allegiance to that superior, whose sovereign prerogatives are underived and unconditional and, therefore, in duty to whom all other duties find their several degress and dignities. In short, "faith is fidelity, fealty, allegiance of the moral

1. N.B. Coleridge in a footnote at this point in the Opus Maximum states that he refers to the Biblical writers "for fit expressions only as I can refer to other well-known books," not for any extrinsic authority.
2. (Classed as a corollary to 4.)
3. M.S.B.3, p.17.

creature to God, in opposition to all usurpation, and in resistance to all temptations to the placing any other claim above or equal with our fidelity to God."¹ Finally, in accordance with the statements that the Will of God is the last and final claim of all man's duty and that this Will, one with the Supreme Intelligence, is revealed to man through the conscience, faith is the obedience of the individual will to reason. The lusts of the flesh bow to the supersensual, the lusts of the eye to the supersensuous, the pride of the understanding to the superfinite spiritual truth, the lusts of the individual will to the universal will and the love of the creature to the love of God.²

Faith, in short, in all its relations subsists in the "synthesis of the Reason and the individual Will, or the reconciliation of the Reason with the Will by the self-subordination of the Will to the Reason."³ By virtue of the will - faith is energy, total not partial, continuous and ordinary, not desultory or occasional, and relates to the whole moral man. By virtue of the factor of reason, faith is a form of knowing, a beholding of truth, an intuitive knowledge. "Faith must partake of the nature of an intuition."⁴ It originates in the Logos, (to use St. John's expression.) He concludes with the definition of faith as:-

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1. M.S.B.3, p.19. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.348.
 2. Ibid: pp.20-21. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.349.
 3. Ibid: p.21. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.349.
 4. Ibid: p.22. (Not in Essay.)

"the source and the sum, the energy and the principle, of the fidelity of man to God by the subordination of his human Will to his Reason as to the sum of all spiritual truths representing and manifesting the Will divine."¹

Starting from the Kantian categorical imperative and bearing continual witness to the influence of Kant,² the argument undoubtedly goes beyond Kant. This does not, however, as Wellek would imply,³ throw the argument into one for a philosophy of faith, in the sense of Jacobi. The argument, for Coleridge, is continuous. Faith is not discontinuous with the other activities of man's mind. It is not set over against reason. Rather, it is linked closely with the practical reason, which is, for Coleridge, the "total man," with will as the underlying principle of his personality.⁴ Thus faith has its root in the will.⁵ Indeed, Coleridge states at one point that he is using faith "in the same sense as Kant uses the Will, as the ground of all particular acts of Willing."⁶ Faith, therefore, as he is quick to assert, is "a total act of the soul: it is the whole state of the mind."⁷

This is a constant note with Coleridge. Crabb Robinson reports him in 1810 as claiming that "religious belief is an act, not of the understanding, but of the will."⁸

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1. MS.B.3, p.22. Cf. Essay on Faith, Aids, p.349.
 2. Cf. Wellek: op.cit., p.133, for an analysis of the resemblances.
 3. Wellek: op.cit., pp.132-134.
 4. Vide supra.
 5. Notes on English Divines, II, p.54.
 6. MS.B.2, p.72.
 7. Ibid: p.72. Cf. The Friend, p.218.
 8. Robinson: op.cit., I, p.308.

His own note of the same year emphasizes the same view.

"Faith," he writes, "is a moral, not an intellectual act."¹

In the Biographia Literaria of 1817, the position is main-

tained again that faith in the existence of God rests on moral grounds.² And in 1818 the passage already quoted

from the manuscript Opus appears, "Faith is a total act of the soul."³ Elsewhere, he writes, "Faith is as real as life;

as actual as force, as effectual as volition."⁴ Faith, he notes, resides not in accuracy of logic, but in "a predisposing purity of heart."⁵

In stressing the nature of faith as a "total act of the Soul," Coleridge presents a religious epistemology equally removed from the dogmatic demand for "belief," of mere intellectual assent, on the part of orthodox Churchmen, from the arid rationalism of Deism, and from the inadequate basis in feeling of Schleiermacher. It is a contribution of permanent value. As Galloway rightly says, "Religion involves the whole man, and in judging of religious beliefs we must consider their relation to all the aspects of our psychical nature."⁶ Moreover, in arguing that the primary act of consciousness involves an act of faith, Coleridge

1. Anima Poetae, pp.215-216.

2. Biographia Literaria, pp.96-97

3. The Friend, p.218.

4. Southey: Life of Wesley, II, p.82.

5. Notes on English Divines, I, p.207.

6. Galloway: Philosophy of Religion, p.269.

shows that faith emerges from the deep springs of man's nature. He thus vindicates faith against the denial of a sceptical naturalism. In addition, this primary act of consciousness is for Coleridge a judgment of the conscience. And conscience arises only in relation to an other-than-self. This goes to the heart of the matter. As Professor Flint says, "There is probably no living practical belief in God which does not begin with the conscience.....Without a moral nature of our own, we could not recognize the moral character and moral government manifested by Him."¹

Further, in the thoroughly Platonic assertion of the cognitive aspect of faith - "a form of knowing" - Coleridge points the way beyond the dualism of Kant. The linkage of faith with reason, although not worked out clearly, and although it does not take into account adequately the implications of the doctrine of sin, nevertheless provides a basis for the religious claim of knowledge of the Supreme Reason or God. The validity of religious knowledge is thus established.

Looking back, the argument appears to be the familiar "moral argument" for the existence of God in another dress. In the main body of the section, Coleridge is emphatic that all he is attempting to do is to clear the ground for the affirmation of God's existence, leaving for a following section the question of "the existential reality of the idea of the Supreme Being."² That is to say, he declines to

1. Flint: Theism, pp.211-212.

2. MS.B.3, p.25.

construe it as the "moral argument." On the other hand, a long note appended to the section in the Opus Maximum, reveals how much weight he does attach to this argument. The note is of interest also from the standpoint of psychological study regarding the origin of religion. Conscience, Coleridge argues, is the ground of consciousness and is underived. The concluding paragraph reads:-

"The objection derived from religious scruples to the doctrine of the absolute primacy, the underived nature of the obligation contained in the moral law, rests wholly on a misconception, which may be elucidated by a case strictly analogous in speculative science. If I am asked how I know that I am, I can only reply, 'Because I am': this is the absolute ground of my knowledge: but if I were asked for the cause, not of my knowledge, but of the thing known, and in this sense the question were put, 'How came you to be?' - the answer must be 'Because God is.' And vice versa the knowledge is derived from the former knowledge as the cause is known in and through its effect.....Man, with all finite self-conscious beings, knows himself to be because he is a man; but he is a man because God is and hath so willed it.....Thus in like manner because we have a conscience we know that there is a God, i.e. that God is the reality of the conscience on the principle that the necessary condition of a certain truth must itself be true. Thus in the order of dignity and objective dependency, the principle of religion is before the moral principle, but in the order of knowledge, the moral principle is the antecedent of our Faith in the principle of religion."¹

The argument, then, in spite of his plea in the main body, does in fact amount to Coleridge's reading of the moral argument. It must be noted that it is Coleridge's reading. That is to say, it is a confessedly religious man who is making use of the argument. To the criticism that this is but an argument in a circle, it would seem that there is no answer,

1. M.S.B.2, pp.137-141. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I, p.346.

according to strict logic. This Coleridge himself was prepared to recognize.¹ From the speculative side, the doctrine of ideas - ideas as self-evidencing and needing no proof - is his only court of appeal.² From the religious side, faith gives its own assurance.

II. Faith, Prayer and Belief.

The intimate connection between faith, prayer, and belief revealed in his later writings serves to indicate how great was his desire to vindicate his definition of faith, not only as a form of energy, but as a form of knowing. Of God, freedom and immortality, Kant had denied the possibility of speculative proof. Such beliefs may be open to faith, but not to the sight of reason. But Coleridge, by insisting that faith is an act of the soul, not above reason, but including the exercise of the practical reason alongside the speculative, was able to go beyond Kant in affirming the "objective reality of the things and states spiritually discovered by faith."³

Faith at its highest becomes prayer. "Prayer,"

1. Aids:p.121.

2. Aids:p.110.

3. Notes on English Divines, I,p.33.

Cf. Ibid, pp.17-18:- "Why the very perfection of reason, namely, those ideas or truth-powers, in which both the spiritual light and the spiritual life are co-inherent and one, should be called super-rational, I do not see. For reason is practical as well as theoretical; or even though I should exclude the practical reason, and confine the term reason to the highest intellectual power, - still I should think it more correct to describe the mysteries of faith as plusquam rationalia than super-rational."

he says in a note, "is faith passing into act."¹ Prayer is the medium of communion with God. It is the very highest energy of which the human heart is capable.²

"Believe me," his nephew reports him as saying, "to pray with all your heart and strength, with the reason and the will, to believe vividly that God will listen to your voice through Christ, and verily do the thing he pleaseth thereupon - this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare upon earth."³

This is a far cry from the early days in which he wrote concerning God:

"Of whose omniscient and all-spreading Love
Aught to implore were impotence of mind."⁴

By 1796, he felt petitionary prayers permissible as "the way most suited to our nature, to stir up the benevolent affections in our hearts."⁵ They were of no influence on the immutable Supreme Being. This sentiment underwent some change, for by 1797 he had recanted the lines written in 1794,⁶ and by 1798 felt that petitionary prayer was consistent with the divine attributes.⁷

About this period, under the expansive influence of love and friendship, Coleridge penned his famous definition of prayer in terms of human love."

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small."⁸

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1. Notes on the Book of Common Prayer, Aids, p.350.
 2. De Quincey: Tait's Magazine, September 1834, p.515.
 3. Table Talk, p.91n.
 4. Poems, p.79 - To a Friend. (1794)
 5. Cottle: Early Recollections, I, p.198.
 6. Poems, p.79n. Cf. Unpublished Letters, I, p.48. - Letter of March 20, 1796.
 7. Letters, I, p.248.
 8. Poems, p.209. - The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

But his own tragic voyage over the 'wide, wide sea' of lonely despair taught him that more was required in the true function of prayer. By 1805 this found expression. Prayer must furnish an asylum. "What comfort in the silent eye upraised to God! 'Thou knowest.' O! what a thought! Never to be friendless, never to be unintelligible!"¹

Prayer must strengthen the will. "The first outward and sensible result of prayer is a penitent resolution, joined with a consciousness of weakness in effecting it."² In the "hell of my mind and conscience and body" of 1814, the ability to pray was to Coleridge the "reward of faith."³ The weakness and limitations of the finite will were all too apparent to his mind. "It is a sore evil," he writes later, "to be and not in God - but it is a still more dreadful evil and misery to will to be other than in God."⁴ In the light of this, prayer is defined as "the mediator or rather the effort to connect the misery of Self with the blessedness of God."⁵ Prayer, then, is aspiration after union with God. "To be one with God, the Father," he notes, "an awful thought beyond all utterance of the awe which it inspires; but by no means wild or mystical. On the contrary, all our experience moves in this direction."⁶

1. Anima Poetae, p.127

2. Cottle: op. cit., II, pp.83-84. Letter of 1807.

3. Ibid: II, p.161.

4. MS.C: p.144. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.220.

5. MS.C: p.144.

6. Ibid: p.143.

Prayer is not just "wishful" thinking. It is an act, an act resulting from the union of the will and the intellect, "It is the whole man that prays."¹ This is echoed in his dissent from Kant's rationalist conception of prayer.² Coleridge comments on Kant's words, "Gebet ist auch nur ein innerlich vor einem Herzenkündiger declarirter Wunsch:"

"I cannot suffer this to pass uncommented especially as the same is re-asserted at large in the 'Religion innerhalb den(sic) Grenzen der reinen Vernunft.' It takes for granted that Prayer is not an act but a mere wishing. O! who ever prayed that has not more than a hundred times felt that scarce an act of Life was so difficult as to determine to pray? Effective resolve to heart-amendment must have commenced before true prayer can be uttered: - and why call words of Hypocrites and Formalists Prayer."³

And elsewhere he writes: "Likewise his (Kant) remarks on prayer in his 'Religion innerhalb der reinen Vernunft,' are crass, nay vulgar and as superficial even in psychology as they are low in taste."⁴ Prayer, then, is not "wishful" thinking or meditation. It does not centre in self, but proceeds from self, as an act. Under the stress of his own needs, Coleridge came to see that prayer must involve petition. "What a deathly Preteritum Perfectum," he exclaims, "would this Denial of Prayer petrify the Universe into!"⁵ Among the petitions constantly recurring in his own prayers are those for forgiveness, and for

1. Note on Book of Common Prayer: Aids, p.350.

2. Cf. Wellek: op.cit., p.94.

3. Kant: Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Tugendlehre, p.105.

British Museum Copy. Printed Wellek: op.cit., p.94.

Cf. Nidecker: Revue de littérature comparée, VII, p.339.

4. Letters, II, p.682.

5. MS.C: p.110.

strength of will.

Prayer is not simply spiritual auto-suggestion. In a note in the Semina Rerum, Coleridge criticizes severely Wordsworth and Southey for asserting that the main element in prayer is pious feeling.

"Wordsworth's and Southey's position, that pious prayers addressed to Idols, Saints, Virgin-Mother etc, find their way to the right object and are well-pleasing to God, is.....a very dangerous error. Is not the Love of Truth a part of Christian Perfection? But this position necessarily tends to a spirit of indifference with regard to the false faith of our fellow-men or our own."¹

Prayer, then, involves an attitude of belief. It must be grounded in the assurance of the reality of God. Further, in virtue of the cognitive aspect of prayer, any belief in the efficacy of prayer must involve a belief concerning the nature of God. As Galloway says succinctly: "To say in a general way that God is means very little, unless we know what you mean by the word God."² This question is faced by Coleridge in a long note of March 6, 1832 in his Semina Rerum.

Leaving for the moment the full discussion of this question, we may so far anticipate the chapter on Coleridge's doctrine of God as to give his conclusion concerning the relation of faith to belief. His closing prayer ends, "Of all the truths of Faith, the most precious to the afflicted Soul is the Faith

1. MS.C: pp.90-91 Note of July 30, 1826.
Cf. MS.C: p.111, where a similar note occurs.
2. Galloway: Philosophy of Religion, p.373.

that thou art a God that hearest prayer."¹ God, as the object of faith, is not demonstrable by the theoretic reason. But faith, passing into prayer, affirms not only His existence, but declares that in some sense or other, His nature is personal, "that He heareth prayer."

Moreover, Coleridge's experience demanded a God who forgives and redeems. At times, a more specific Christian content may be discerned in his notes.² In a note on Southey's Life of Wesley, Christian faith is defined in the familiar terms as the identity of the reason and the will, but it is "consequent on a divine rekindling."³ In a note penned on Kant's: Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, he writes:

"Revelation forbids us as much to affirm a Justice in God unmodified by Mercy, as Mercy at variance with Justice. The attribute, mercy-justice, consists in the acceptance of the Past, according to the Total State of the final Present. The total Energy of Will, the one act of the whole Being, which alike can produce this state, is Gospel Faith."⁴

The most striking passage, however, is to be found in the Aids:

"Stedfast by Faith. This is absolutely necessary for resistance to the Evil Principle. There is no standing out without some firm ground to stand on: and this Faith alone supplies. By Faith in the Love of Christ the power of God becomes ours. When the soul is beleaguered by enemies, weakness on the walls, treachery at the gates and corruption in the citadel, then by Faith

1. MS.C: p.166.

2. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I, pp.193-196. Note on the Lord's Prayer.

3. Southey: op.cit., II, p.82. Cf. Notes Theological, Political & Miscellaneous, pp.131,138.

4. British Museum Copy, pp.95-96. Printed by Nidecker: Revue de littérature comparée, VII, p.142.

she says - Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the World! thou art my strength! I look to thee for deliverance! And thus she overcomes
Fix thy thought on what Christ did, what Christ suffered, what Christ is - as if thou wouldst fill the hollowness of thy Soul with Christ!"¹

On the whole, however, Coleridge is content with defining the nature of faith rather than expanding the content of the belief affirmed. His one insistence is that God must be a God able to commune with man, able to redeem man and fit him for such communion. In short, God must be a God "that heareth prayer," and "that seeketh that which was lost." It is the conclusion of a man whose long mental and spiritual pilgrimage has taught him that intellectual theism is not enough.

1. Aids, pp.208-209.

CHAPTER VI.

Doctrine of God.

1. The Idea of God.

On the basis of his argument from faith and conscience, Coleridge is prepared to discuss "the existential reality of the Idea of the Supreme Being."¹ The existence of faith is a fundamental fact in human nature. On this ground alone is it possible to consider the notion of a divinity which the senses cannot convey nor the world afford. As an idea it is indemonstrable by reason. Yet it may be possible "by reason itself to demonstrate its indemonstrability."²

In a note written in Tennemann's Geschichte der Philosophie, Coleridge asks,

"May not the Indemonstrability of the Existence of a Supreme Being be demonstrated? And is it not evident, that in the sentence, Proof of the existence of the Supreme Being, the words, "the

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1. MS.B.3, pp.25-61.

Cf. Anima Poetae; p.63. Note from 1803.-- "The whole of religion seems to me to rest on and in the question: The One and The Good--are these words or realities?"

Cf. Anima Poetae: p.77. Note from 1804.-- "I saw that God is the One, the Good--possesses it not, but is it."

2. MS.B.3, p.34.

Existence of" are superfluous, a pleonasm? Again: I can understand what is meant by a Proof, that the Supreme Being does or wills this or that; but that the Supreme Being is, is a mere tautology.....Again: the Idea of a Supreme Being is a misuse of the term, Idea. We may have conceptions of a Man, perceptions and images of this man; but the Idea of Man. Equally improper is the phrase, an Idea of--It is either no Idea, or not at all; or it is the Idea."¹

The dialectic intellect is able to establish the general affirmation of a supreme reality, but it is incapable of communicating insight or conviction concerning the Deity and his relation to the world. Hence, it confounds the creator with the aggregate of his creatures and thus denies the reality of all finite existence.² This amounts to practical atheism.

On the other hand, the postulates with which all speculative disquisition must commence derive their legitimacy and sanction from the conscience. Hence,

"from whichever of the two points the Reason may start, from the Things that are seen to the One Invisible or from the Idea of the Absolute One to the Things that are seen, it will find a Chasm, which the Moral Being only, which the Spirit and Religion of man alone can fill up or over-bridge."³

A. Criticism of the Theistic "Proofs."

Turning from this affirmation of spiritual realism, Coleridge proceeds to discuss the teleological argument for the existence of God.⁴ He admits the full weight of the argument. "The self-evidence of the great

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1. British Museum Copy: flyleaf Vol.8, 2nd half.
2. MS.B.3: pp.36-37.
3. Ibid: p.39.
4. Ibid: pp.40-46.

Truth that there is a Divine Author of an order so excellent seems to us to supersede all detail of proof."¹ Judged by its practical value, "that we should all have a firm and lively faith in the existence of God, not that all Men should be enabled to give a philosophic demonstration of existence,"² it deserves its superiority over all other methods of conviction. In the first place,³ it is free from abstractions. The reasoning is conveyed in a series of pictures. The only connection needed is supplied instinctively by the soul. Secondly, it is "that proof in which every other must have begun." Thirdly, the proof is connected in every part with a "sense of the high Wisdom, Providence and adorable Power" of the God whose existence it sets out to demonstrate. Thus the soul is filled with the highest emotions of humility and wonder--feelings "which in their highest degree belong exclusively to the Idea of God."⁴

On the other hand, it is one thing to deny the validity of an argument, and another to determine its true nature and "thus to prevent it from being passed off for a proof of a different kind, for a something which it neither can be nor ought to be."⁵ The argument in question supposes the

1. MS.B.3: p.41.

2. Ibid: pp.42-43.

3. Ibid: pp.43-44.

4. Cf. Otto: The Idea of the Holy, Chapters II, III, where he discussed the "numen" and the "numinous."

5. MS.B.3: p.46.

idea of God already present in the mind and assumes that the reality of His moral attributes has already been established. To learn the proof is really "a process of reminiscence."¹

Not to understand this religious assumption in the argument leads to the mistaken belief that the idea of God and the conviction of its reality were deduced from nature. This habitual referring of the divine idea to nature leads to an identification of the one with the other. The idea is first abstracted from nature and then personified, "by that most common of artifices, the sudden transformation of an effect into a cause by repeating the same number of facts under the form and the terms of agency."² This is the road by which many speculative minds have travelled from theism to pantheistic atheism. God thus is deprived of any religious significance. He becomes Fate, not a moral Creator and Governor. Holiness and sin lose all meaning.

"If, however, we dare anticipate any result from the known Laws of Association, we may predict that the habitual connection of the Idea of God with the laws of Nature, and for the same purpose that of accounting for the Phenomena of Nature, in proportion as it estranges the Mind from the personal, will indispose it to all those doctrines of Religion, which either present the Deity to our Minds in the form of personality, as well as those that rise out of his personal attributes and, in fact, to Religion itself, which without a sense of the Divine Personality ceases to be Religion and becomes (a) mere hypothesis, which, if it were more legitimate and philosophical, might enlarge the Intellect and gratify the curiosity, but could inspire neither fear, nor hope, nor love."³

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1. MS.B.3: p.47.
 2. Ibid: pp.48-49.
 3. Ibid: pp.56-57.

On the other hand, in the like spirit as St. Paul,

"all the sounder Schoolmen and the first Fathers of the Reformation with one consent place the origin of the Idea in the Reason, the ground of its Reality in the Conscience and the confirmation, reproduction and progressive development (of it) in the order and harmony of the visible World: as far, I mean, as they speak abstractedly from Revelation."¹

Again, the mind, absorbed in the strict contemplation of law in nature, finds it difficult to grasp the principle of a personal will--"that very principle, of which Nature knows not, which the light of the Sun can never reveal, which we must either despair of finding or must seek and find within ourselves."² Hence, it is understandable how a mind so educated should recoil from or despise as folly the organized creed of a religion "the very postulate and precondition of which is an admission of a Will."³ In short, "to deduce a Deity wholly from Nature is in the result to substitute an Apotheosis of Nature for Deity."⁴

Coleridge's general thesis of the indemonstrability of the existence of God, is elaborated further in the second of the long chapters of the Huntington manuscript. If it be possible, he argues, to demonstrate the existence of God by deduction from the notices of the senses or by the

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1. MS.B.3: p.58. Printed Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher p.109, (quoted freely).
 2. Ibid: p.62.
 3. Ibid: p.61.
 4. Ibid: p.61.

ordinary processes of logical reasoning, then there must be a corresponding science.¹ And if such a science exists, then it must be true that "without pre-supposing the idea of God," the existence of God can be determined by the senses, i.e., intuitively, or by deduction by the understanding.² The understanding, however, does not give knowledge materially.³ "It is by placing knowledge under some given series of conception, as their common support" that we are said to understand this or that. These conceptions are the postulates of each particular science. Again, all the sciences assume "a something common to them all, by virtue of which they are all alike science substantively."⁴ However we separate by means of reflection, abstraction or generalization the objects of the sciences from each other (e.g., physics from zoology) yet we assume that all "co-inhere" in one common ground. Similarly, with our reasoning, "that, without which we cannot reason, must be presumed as the ground of the reasoning."⁵ This basis, common to all science, cannot however be itself the subject of any particular science. There can be therefore no such science as suggested.

"I look round, and try in vain to discover a vacant place for a science, the result of which is to be the knowledge and ascertainment of God, i.e. of the reality and existence of the Supreme Being--on the

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1. MS.H: pp.203-209.
 2. Ibid: p.211.
 3. Ibid: pp.213-215.
 4. Ibid: pp.215-217.
 5. Ibid: p.225.

conditions being such as were stated when the question was first proposed by us, namely, in the absence or rejection of the idea as the datum. The doubt respecting the possibility of such a science was expressed so far conditionally, i.e. unless the idea was taken as the datum, and the result anticipated and precontained in the premise."¹

In the very nature of the case, no proper scientific proof or logical demonstration of the existence of God is possible. In other words, "the idea of the Godhead is the true source and indispensable precondition of all our knowledge of God."² Consequently, all that is valuable in the so-called proofs consists in expositions of this idea, or "the different means, by which the understanding is enabled to exemplify this idea in all its experiences."³

Coleridge seizes the opportunity of illustrating his thesis by a critical review of certain of the so-called theistic proofs. The first is the "proof" from intuition,⁴ based on the view that we know God by the sense, "in the same way as we behold mathematical figures, e.g. the Point, Line, Triangle, Circle, &c. of pure Geometry." Coleridge rejects this view on the ground that mathematical forms are entitled objects of the sense "only because they may be confidently anticipated in all men at all times." They have their sole subsistence in the mind or sentient faculty. The so-called proof, therefore, starts from a contradiction, for, on asking

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1. MS.H: pp.225-227. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher: p.223. (Quoted freely).
 2. Ibid: p.247.
 3. Ibid: p.247.
 4. Ibid: pp.251-257.

for the real ground of all reality, which includes "the reality of the mind and the reality out of the mind", we are offered a portion or derivative of the one as the ground of both. As Muirhead has pointed out,¹ there may be some doubt on the realist side as to Coleridge's characterization of mathematical forms as purely mental. On the other hand, there is no doubt that his fundamental criticism goes to the root of all schemes that would claim absolute existence and validity for ideas basically derived from the "sentient faculty." Such theories leave out one-half the facts at the very outset.²

The second theory to which Coleridge turns his attention is that God is everywhere revealed to sense: "Jupiter est quodcunque vides."³ This theory is of some historical importance, forming as it does the basis of Brahminism. Quoting from the Bhagavad Gita, a book that "walks like a ghost of a departed world," Coleridge finds little in it to sustain his early homage. He finds in the Sanskrit philosophical and religious writings a character best accounted for on the supposition of "childish intellects living among gigantic objects, of mean thoughts and huge things--living Lilliputs among inanimate Brobdignags."⁴ There is nothing "Miltonic" in

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher: p.224.

2. Coleridge classifies the scheme as a "mere possibility", and not a theory that had been actually adopted anywhere. Muirhead points out (op. cit. p.224) that certain of Coleridge's English predecessors, notably John Norris, had constantly appealed to such illustrations drawn from mathematics as samples of the ideas, not merely in the mind of God, but of the mind of God. This is of interest, indicating the point at which, under Kantian influence, he parted from his Platonist predecessors.

3. MS.H: pp.257-281.

4. Ibid: p.267.

them. Milton never passes off bigness for greatness.¹ Theologically, the system of Brahminism is essentially "Atheism in the form of Polytheism."² Judged by its ethics, and taking "the ethical consequences as the criterion of the Theology," the system fails at two points. In the first place, the ethics are equivocal at the best and "worthy only of a Mexican priesthood." In the second place, the ethics, good or bad, have "no imaginable connexion." Life is only hinted at, while of love, "without which as the source, life itself has no religious bearing, nor any intelligible genesis," there is no word. This criticism is of some importance historically. It goes to the root of the matter, and therefore remains valid.³

Finally, there is the theory founded on inference from sensory data; that is to say, the argument from design.⁴ Again acknowledging its impressiveness, Coleridge criticizes the argument on the grounds already familiar. The phenomena of nature are read in the light of the idea. It is not derived from them.

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1. MS.H: p.269.
 2. Ibid: p.277.
 3. Coleridge's interest in Hinduism has historical significance. He acknowledges a debt of homage on his presentation to "these foreign potentates" of Brahminism and is able therefore to enter sympathetically into the state of mind of those of his contemporaries--he names, "the late truly admirable Sir W. Jones" and Mr. Wilkins--who had come under their spell.
 4. MS.H: pp.281-293.

Summing up, Coleridge reaffirms the impossibility of deriving the idea of God from any foreign source.¹ God can neither be discovered by the senses, nor by the understanding working on sensory data, neither from the facts of the forms and functions of the understanding, nor by the judgments formed in consequence of the congruity of the phenomena of the senses with its own forms. The "proofs" have value only when it is understood that the idea is already existent in the human mind. This being understood, "the proof is by me admitted to be no less conclusive on the intellect than it is persuasive for the affections." What remains is to expose the "insufficiency and confusion in the reasoning" of those who hold the possibility, in Locke's language, "of conveying it (the idea of God) into the mind." The idea can only be awakened "so that the knowledge resulting....can be fairly said to have been given." What is needed to awaken the idea is the appropriate stimulus. As the manuscript ends abruptly at this point, where some positive exposition is to be expected, we are forced to rely on kindred passages elsewhere.

B. The Idea of God not proved, but "given."

From what we know of his fundamental religious realism, we may take it that the appropriate stimulus necessary to awaken the idea has its origin in the divine, the resultant experience being the experience of religion, the response of a person to the personal God. This, in fact, is what

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1. MS.H: pp.293-301.

emerges from a review of the argument. God's existence cannot be proved by logical argument. As an idea, it is not subject to the ordinary rules of logic. It is "given." This is made explicitly clear in a note in Tennemann's Geschichte der Philosophie,¹ where Coleridge gives what he supposes would be the reply of Anselm or Plotinus to Kant's criticism of the ontological proof.

"Friend!" he writes, addressing Kant, "Your whole argument is a petitio principii on your side, involving an equally arbitrary negatio principii against me. You assume the falsehood of my principle and from this assumption you conclude its' falsehood. I begin by asserting that there are Thoughts that are not simply and distinctly Subjective, Thoughts (if so you will call them) that are not of the same class with the Conceptions of the Understanding, the reality or objective validity of which is derived from the Senses. To distinguish the one from the other, I name the former, Ideas. This distinction therefore you should have attacked, and not against my sense-- & identifying Ideas with Conceptions, deduce against me what relatively to Conceptions I am ready to admit and see as clearly as yourself."

This note is also of interest as revealing Coleridge's Platonic attitude to the Anselmic argument. The existence of God comes under the heading of ideas. It is given by reason, "the presence of the Deity to a Soul."² It is revealed only in the experience of communion with the Supreme Reason, the source of ideas. It cannot therefore be deduced.

"Did you deduce your own being?" he asks. "Even that is less absurd than the conceit of deducing the Divine being? Never would you have had the notion, had you

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1. British Museum Copy, Vol.8, 1st half: Note at end.
2. Ibid.

not had the idea--rather, had not the idea worked in you like the memory of a name which we cannot recollect and yet feel that we have and which reveals its existence in the mind only by a restless anticipation and proves its a priori actuality by the almost explosive instantaneity with which it is welcomed and recognized in its re-emersion out of the cloud, or its re-ascent from the horizon of consciousness."¹

Hence his acute criticism of the teleological argument:-

"Assume," he states, "the existence of God,--and then the harmony and fitness of the physical creation may be shown to correspond with and support such an assumption;--but to set about proving the existence of a God by such means is a mere circle, a delusion. It can be no proof to a good reasoner, unless he violates all syllogistic logic, and presumes his conclusion."²

Coleridge's rejection of the argument from design on the grounds that it assumes the idea of God, and then reads this into the phenomena, instead of deriving it from them, is essentially sound.³ It strikes deeper than any criticism, in the tradition of Hume and Kant, which points to the failure of the argument to prove more than the existence of an architect of the world limited by his materials.

Coleridge, finally, is eager to point out that the exposure of the flaws in an argument is not the same thing as the rejection of the argument in toto. If the religious a priori be clearly recognized, he is prepared to accept the "proofs" for what they are--"a process of reminiscence"--and

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1. Anima Poetae: p.300. Cf. Table Talk: p.274.--Jan.20, 1834.
"How did the Atheist get his idea of that God whom he denies?"
 2. Table Talk: p.274. -- Feb.22, 1834.
 3. Cf. Aids: p.121.

for their confirmatory value. His respect for the teleological argument on this basis is openly acknowledged. His adherence to the moral argument, as seen earlier, is clearly on the same grounds. In a note on Nikolai's Philosophie, he writes,

"But tho' Kant justly denies a positive demonstrative force to the Arguments a posteriori, for the existence of a God, does he not admit that they are inducements of such strength that a man would deserve to be deemed mad, who rejected them?"¹

Again he says, in the Aids,

"For every mind not devoid of all reason, and desperately conscience-proof, the Truth which it is the least possible to prove, it is little less than impossible not to believe!"²

This, then, is the end of the matter.³ His criticism of the theistic proofs is essentially the same as that of Professor James years later:- "the attempt to demonstrate by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience is absolutely hopeless."⁴

II. The Origin of the Idea of God in the Mind of Man.

The foregoing discussion leads logically to the consideration of the experience which awakens the idea of God in the soul of man. Coleridge recognized this, as the sequence of chapters in the manuscript Opus clearly indicates--"Faith

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1. p.20. Ottery St. Mary Marginalia, I, 39.

2. Aids: p.121.

3. Vide Wellek: op.cit., pp.88-94, for a discussion of Coleridge's relation to Kant with regard to the theistic proofs.

4. James: Varieties of Religious Experience: p.435. Vide Appendix C.

and Conscience", "The Existential Reality of the Idea of the Supreme Being", and now, "On the Origin of the Idea of God in the Mind of Man."¹ In the one the basis is laid for his religious epistemology. Conscience, he states, is the ground of consciousness, and religion of morality. In the next the speculative way to God is shown to be wanting. The existence of God is indemonstrable by speculative reason. The theistic proofs are valid only for the religious man--for the man who already has the idea of God in his mind. How then cometh religion? How cometh the idea of God to the soul of man?

The question here is one of the psychological process rather than of the ultimate origin. Writing as a psychologist Coleridge finds the roots of religion in instinct. He does not mean by this that there is a special religious instinct. Nor does he mean instinct in the sense of merely animal instinct. Man carries these animal instincts within his nature, but he has something in addition. This something, which is reason, is the hallmark of his humanity. "All begins in instinct, but do all therefore begin alike? Oh, no! each hath its own and the instincts of Man must be human, rational instincts, Reason itself mutely prophesying of its own future advent."² All nature's instincts are prophetic. "Through all Nature there is a manifestation of power pre-existent to the product."³

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1. MS.B.3: pp.63-79.
 2. Ibid: p.67.
 3. Ibid: p.63.

The instinct of humanity that prophesies of religion is not, however, the animal one of self-preservation or the impulse to happiness.¹ It is rather that in man there is an impulse to respond to something beyond himself. "Beyond the beasts, yea, and above the Nature of which they are the inmates, Man possesses love and faith and the sense of the permanent."² And this is because his understanding is a human understanding. It differs not only in degree, but in kind, from that of animals. It differs

"not solely nor chiefly from its greater extent than which the dog, the elephant, and the ant possess, but because it is irradiated by a higher power, the power namely of seeking what it can nowhere behold and finding that which itself has first transfused the permanent, that which in the endless flux of sensible things can alone be known, which is, indeed, in all, but exists for the Reason alone, for it is Reason."³

This "love and faith and sense of the permanent" is first evinced in the child's trust in its parents.

"The first Dawnings of its humanity will break forth in the Eye that connects the Mother's face with the warmth of the mother's bosom, the support of the mother's Arms. A thousand tender kisses excite a finer life in its lips; and there, first, language is imitated from the mother's smiles. Ere yet a conscious self exists, the love begins and the first love is love to another. The Babe acknowledges a self in the Mother's form years before it can recognize a self in its own. Faith implicit, faith the offspring of unreflecting love, is the antecedent, and indispensable condition of all its knowledge."⁴

1. MS.B.3: p.67. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.252, where he points out that current psychology construed "rational instincts" exactly along these lines.

2. Ibid: p.68.

3. Ibid: p.68.

4. Ibid: pp.65-66.

"Why," he asks in conclusion, "have men a Faith in God? There is but one answer, the Man and the Man alone has a Father and a Mother."¹

On the other hand, "by a mystery of the human soul," there is the possibility that the place of the truly permanent may be usurped by "the objects of the senses."² Man's humanity then becomes subordinated to his animal nature. By giving eyes to blind appetite, selfishness is transformed into self-love and degradation is enriched by consciousness, intuition and choice. The higher part of man's nature becomes his avenging demon. "He must become the victim of those powers beyond self which he has alienated and estranged from their rightful objects."³ If the senses be thus directed to "objects incapable of being sympathized with,"⁴ the self borrows from the objects a sort of unnatural outwardness and "becomes, as it were, a thing;" while by reaction the things are invested with the attributes of life and power.⁵ Hence, religion is degraded into ceremony and then by reaction the ceremonies are animated into magic. But such a process, the "necessary consequence of the first false step in the formation of the human character," has no warrant in nature.

"As sure as ever the heart of man is made tender by the presence of a love that has no self, by a joy in

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1. MS.B.3: p.67. Printed in Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.252, (quoted freely).
 2. Ibid: pp.69-71.
 3. Ibid: p.72.
 4. Ibid: p.73.
 5. Ibid: p.77.

the protection of the helpless, which is at once impulse, motive and reward, so surely is it elevated to the Universal Parent."¹

In short, the dawn of humanness in the child is the birth of religion. It is also the birth of thought.

"The first introduction to thought takes place in the transfer of person from the senses to the invisible. The reverence of the Invisible, substantiated by the feeling of love, this, which is the essence and proper definition of religion, is the commencement of the intellectual life, of the humanity."²

All this has the merit of seizing the essential point. Dr. Muirhead interprets Coleridge as holding that religion has its beginning in "that which carries the soul beyond itself and connects it, through the affections,"³ with a larger world." This would make religion an affair of the emotions--something which Coleridge himself rejects. Rather is it not that religion has its roots in an initial act of trust, in which the whole personality is involved? This surely is Coleridge's meaning.

In adopting this view, Coleridge took a position far in advance of the psychology of his own day. There can be no question of influence, but in the light of the recent studies by Piaget in this field of the child's ideas of the external world, Coleridge's view takes on added historical significance. Measured against the

1. MS.B.3: p.78. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.253.
2. Ibid: p.79.
3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.253-254. (Italics mine.)

voluminous literature of modern times, Coleridge's treatment may appear meagre enough. Compared, however, with the varying theories which this literature reveals--from the psycho-analytic theories of Freud and Jung and Leuba to the sociological theories of Durkheim--Coleridge's view merits our attention as being both psychologically and religiously sound.

III. God and Personality.

Underneath all of Coleridge's later writings lies the assumption that God, in some sense, is personal.¹ God must be more than a first cause, even if, as in his own metaphysical theory, this first cause be defined as will.

"This is a constituent of Religion"--to repeat a passage already given--"but something is still wanting. To be Religion, it must be the Reference of an intelligent, responsible Will Finite to an Absolute Will! and the Referant must refer as a Will, and a Life, i.e. a Person, to a living I AM. We may feel from, and about a thing, an event, a quality--we can feel for whatever is sentient--but we feel toward a Person only. The Personal in me is the ground and condition of Religion: and the Personal alone is the Object."²

Only on the basis of belief in God as personal has religion any meaning.

1. Cf. the letter of December 5, 1803, in which Coleridge speaks of the "article of my faith...which is the nearest to my heart,--the pure fountain of all my moral and religious feelings and comforts,--I mean the absolute Impersonality of the Deity." - Letters, I, p.444.

By 1805, this thought has undergone change:-

Cf. a note of 1805 - Anima Poetae, p.133. "the best, the truly lovely in each and all, is God. Therefore the truly beloved is the symbol of God to whomever it is truly beloved by."

Cf. Anima Poetae, p.294. "God is Love--that is, an object that is absolutely subject." (1819-1828)

2. MS.C: pp.125-126.

But Coleridge was never content to rest simply in an affirmation. He realized that the problem of personality in God is one of cardinal importance; and he recognized that the ascription of personality to the Supreme Will raises certain difficulties. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in the manuscript Opus Maximum two chapters in which personality, in both its human and divine aspects, is submitted to examination. The chapters in question are entitled "Personality"¹ and "Ideas flowing out of the Divine Personality."²

Examining the concept of personality, Coleridge finds that it is not the same as individuality.³ Nor is it possible to predicate personality of animals or plants. Two attributes are necessary to the predication of personality--reason and a responsible will.⁴ Of these two, reason is incompatible with peculiar possession. "It cannot in strict language be called a faculty, much less a personal property of any human mind."⁵ A responsible will, therefore, is the essential ground and indispensable condition of personality.⁶ The conclusion is that personality "is contained exclusively

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1. MS.B.3: pp.164-190.

2. Ibid: pp.191-283.

Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.222, where he coins the title "Personal and Impersonal Reason" and ascribes it to Coleridge. This title does not occur in the manuscript.

3. MS.B.3: p.164.

4. Ibid: pp.165-166.

5. Ibid: p.167.

6. Ibid: p.158. Cf. Aids, p.190.

in the idea of a finite will, which cannot indeed be conceived otherwise than in some relation to a co-present reason, but yet capable of being conceived in a relation of difference and contrariety to it."¹

The difficulty of applying such a definition to the idea of God derives from the fact that in man the will is subject to limitation, or deficiency, defect or adulteration.

"Were it otherwise, the wiser a man became, the greater his power of self-determination, with so much less propriety could he be spoken of as a person; and vice versa the more exclusive the limits and the smaller the sphere enclosed, in short, the less Will he possessed, the more a person, till at length his personality would be at its maximum when he bordered on the mere animal or the idiot, i.e. when, according to all use of language, he ceased to be a person at all."²

The essence of personality, therefore, cannot be limitation, which has reference only to the reason.³ On the contrary, with the increase of limitation, the personality decreases. Theoretically this would mean the possibility of the evanescence of the personality. But in reality, "it is not permitted to a responsible Will utterly to vanish."⁴ A man may "precipitate" himself into a fiend, but he cannot be on a level with the beasts.

"It follows therefore, " Coleridge concludes, that the essence of Personality is to be found in none of those qualities, negations or privations by which the finite is diverse from the absolute, the human Will from the divine, man from God:- nay, as we have found these diversities proportionally subtracting from personal perfection, it inevitably follows that by the subtraction of these diversities, the personality must become more perfect."⁵

1. MS.B.3: pp.171-172.

2. Ibid: pp.173-174. Printed Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher,

3. Ibid: pp.174-188. (p.228.)

4. Ibid: pp.188-189.

5. Ibid: p.189.

In the light of this analysis of personality from the side of limitation, it is easy for Coleridge to take the next step. The perfection of personality is in God. "God therefore must be at once the absolute person and the ground of all personality."¹ To hesitate to call God a person is like hesitating, when thinking of the root as antecedent to the stem and branches, to name it the root, because the name

"might convey a false conception of its being such in exclusion and privation of the other parts, and should thus cast back the eclipsing shadow of the indigent particulars on the all-sufficient, self-sufficing basis of their common being and the originating cause of their particular existence."²

On the other hand, Coleridge is quite aware that there must be some difference between personality as predicated of man and as predicated of God. He, therefore, suggests the term personeity to indicate what is at once personal and more than personal in God.³ Reserving the term

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1. MS.B.3: pp.189-190. The manuscript reads personeity here. It appears to be a mistake in view of what is said elsewhere of the relationship between personality and personeity.
 2. Ibid: p.190. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.228. Quotes freely from the MS. which reads, "If we hesitated in calling him a Person, when we are with cautious reverence speaking of Absolute Deity, it can be only on the ground of his transcendency and inclusive nature. If, to take an imperfect and rude metaphor (but what other on a subject so unique is possible?) we were thinking of the root antecedent to the shooting forth of the stem and branches, and hesitated to name it the root inasmuch as by the ordinary use of speech the name might convey..." MS.B.3: pp.189-190.
 3. Ibid: p.160.

personality for man, Coleridge holds that personhood differs from personality as being free from imperfection.¹ Further, as the Absolute Will is the ground of the finite will, so personhood is the ground and source of personality.² On this basis Coleridge feels justified in maintaining that personhood is an essential constituent in the idea of God.³ If, then, the idea of the Absolute as will be Coleridge's first idea, his second is that this will is personal.

"The Will therefore as being, and because a Will, therefore, a personal being having the causa sui or ground and principle of its being in its own inexhaustible causative might:- this is our second idea."⁴

Again, Coleridge's conception of finite personality demands a reciprocity between the self and an other-than-self.⁵ The will as the principle of personality is manifested only in expression. Further, the only rational objects of a will "in reference to itself as a will" are persons.⁶ The I, in short, needs a thou in order to develop.⁷ This development comes through sympathy and understanding. The conception of personality as an exclusive centre of

1. MS.B.3: p.190.

2. Ibid: pp.160, 243. Cf. Notes Theol., Pol., & Misc. p.3.

3. Ibid: p.190.

4. Ibid: pp.243-244.

5. Vide Faith and Conscience, Chapter V.

6. MS.B.3: p.180.

7. Vide Faith and Conscience, Chapter V.

self-feeling is thus precluded.¹ Personality is an ideal to be realized in ever fuller degree by progressive spirits.

Difficulties, however, are at once apparent when the attempt is made to apply this conception to the Deity. Coleridge faces the difficulty squarely. He holds that if his analysis of personality be correct, then "alterity" or "otherness" cannot be a mere abstraction.²

"The alterity must have some distinctive from the original absolute identity or how could it be contemplated as other, and yet this distinctive must be such as not to contradict the other co-essential term. It must remain in some sense the Self, though another Self."³

Applied to the Deity, this means that the infinite fulness is poured into an infinite capacity, that is to say, into a self "wholly and adequately repeated," so that the "very repetition contains the distinction from the primary act."⁴ This other self is self-subsistent, but not self-originated. Only God is self-originated. The other self is therefore not "the same" as God.⁵

Again, if it be said that God is love--a wider statement than merely that God is--then there must be

1. Muirhead remarks that this view of personality is "the first clear statement in English philosophy of this point of view, and has the advantage of carrying us beyond the ambiguities that still infect voluntaristic schemes in our own time."--Coleridge as Philosopher, p.229.
2. MS.B.3: p.245.
3. Ibid: p.246. Cf. Muirhead: op. cit. p.229, where he wrongly gives "altereity" as Coleridge's word for "otherness." The word is consistently spelled alterity in the manuscript.
4. Ibid: p.251.
5. Ibid: pp.251-252.

some adequate object of the divine love. "How can there be love without communication? And how can there be a communication without pre-supposing some other with ($\pi\rho\acute{o}s\ \tau\acute{o}\nu$) the communicant?"¹ As there can be no love without life, no communication without act, so the divine act must be causative--either generative, productive or creative. "Next therefore to the eternal act....is the co-eternal act of alterity or the begetting of the identity in the alterity."² This is not the same as production of thing from thing. It has meaning only as we remember that it is "truths of mind," "acts of spirit," and "unities transcendent and indivisible" of which we are discoursing. The only terms, "however inadequate," which convey meaning are such terms as "utterance of the Word," "the Word." But this Word or Logos "in and to whom the mind passeth forth or is uttered" is personal. The Word is spoken of therefore as "the only begotten Son of God."

"Thus," Coleridge concludes, "the filial Word is the intelligible et mens altera, the Father the mens absoluta; but then in relation to the idea of himself the Intellectual Word,--he is both the mens absoluta et intelligibile reciprocum; as the Father knoweth the Son even so the Son knoweth the Father."³

From this argument for the self-created alterity in the Deity, Coleridge advances to the discussion of the Trinity, in keeping with his avowed purpose of showing "the possibility and ideal truth of the dogmas common to the churches

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1. MS.B.3: p.252.

2. Ibid: pp.252-253.

3. Ibid: p.254. N.B. Coleridge cites Philo Judaeus in this discussion of the Logos.

of Christendom."¹ His treatment of the problem of personality, however, first merits some comment.

It will be recognized at once that Coleridge's treatment of the problem is strikingly modern in tone. It is of particular historical significance in that it anticipates much that is best in modern theism.² Analyzing personality from the point of view of limitation, it is seen that God is the perfect person, in whom no limitations exist. But judged by human standards of personality, God is different. In Him there is personhood, or--as modern writers suggest--God is supra-personal. Coleridge even writes of personality or personhood in God--anticipating Webb's suggestion that it is better to speak of personality in God rather than the personality of God.

Finally, there is the recognition that, if the development of personality in man necessitates an other-than-self, in God this cannot be. He creates the necessary conditions within Himself. God is not confronted with an independent not-self. He is not self-centred. He is self-manifesting, by and through His Word. Coleridge therefore feels that the claim of the religious soul that its God is personal--self-manifesting and able to maintain relations with men--is justified on metaphysical grounds.

1. MS.B.3: p.255.

2. Cf. C.C.J. Webb: God & Personality, and
Galloway: Religion and Modern Thought.

IV. The Doctrine of the Trinity.

To a mind like that of Coleridge the subject of the Trinity was one of peculiar interest. He was well aware of the danger to Christian life involved in exclusive pre-occupation with metaphysical questions.

"I am persuaded," he writes, "that the vehement, widely spread and long continued Arian Controversy had the effect among other injurious effects, of fixing the mind and heart of the Church too exclusively on the Metaphysical Prolegomena of the Christian Religion, even to the obscuration of the Son of Man in the co-eternal Son of God. Even as the exclusive contemplation of God as the Ground of the Universe and of his physical attributes, omnipotence, omnipresence &c, seducing the imagination into (conscious or unconscious) Spinozism, indisposes men for the Personal Deity, the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation....so did the too constant and partial occupation of the Thoughts with the Trinity, and the eternal Divinity of the Word eclipse.....the mild Orb of our Lord's Humanity that rose with healing in its' rays."¹

But in spite of this caveat, his mind was too deeply immersed in the "metaphysical prolegomena" of each and every subject of human interest for Coleridge to pass lightly over the problems of Trinitarian theology.² Even during his Unitarian days the subject was one of speculative interest. Under the influence of neo-Platonism he was able to regard

1. MS.C: pp.114-115.

2. Vide his notes on Sherlock's Vindication of the Doctrine of the Holy and Ever Blessed Trinity, etc. (Notes on English Divines, II, pp.144-178.)

Vide his notes on Waterland's Vindication of Christ's Divinity, etc. (Notes on English Divines, II, pp.178-211.)

Vide his notes on Oxlee's The Christian Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, etc. (Notes on English Divines, II, pp.255-265.)

the Trinity as "a fair scholastic inference from the being of God as a creative intelligence."¹ Constant notes bear witness to his continued interest in neo-Platonism especially from the standpoint of the doctrine of the Trinity. This has led to some misapprehension regarding his relation to neo-Platonism. It is therefore of interest to find in the Huntingdon manuscript a long passage in which Coleridge institutes a direct comparison between his own scheme and the neo-Platonic one, submitting the latter at the same time, to an acute criticism.²

At the outset he points out that it is necessary to distinguish between the neo-Platonic scheme and the work of Plato. It was no part of Plato's aim in his public works to develop his philosophy along this line, and what is known from the Dialogues is incompatible with the doctrine of emanation or expansion.³ The neo-Platonic scheme of the Absolute proceeding as The Good, Mind and Soul, each identical in essence with the other, was developed in opposition to the warning given by Speusippus, "the most faithful organ of original Platonism." The true order, according to Speusippus, was The One, Reason and the Good.⁴

But aside from this difference, the neo-Platonists, and even Speusippus, failed to give a positive character to the

1. Biographia Literaria: p.97.

2. MS.H: pp.147-201.

3. Ibid: pp.147-157.

4. Ibid: pp.157-163.

first principle. To describe the Absolute as that which neither acts, nor does, nor thinks, nor even is, is to describe nothing. But nothing implies something. Negation implies a positive idea.¹ Here is one weakness in the neo-Platonic scheme. The Good ceases to have real meaning and becomes "a mere reverential epithet" independent of being, intelligence and action, whereas goodness "assuredly" implies "a given direction of a power" or "the directing act itself" and in all cases "the accomplishment of any act or process morally considered."²

Again, the Plotinian scheme does not render intelligible the relation of Mind to The Good, inasmuch as "we are forbidden to conceive of the antecedent as efficient."³ Nor is this the only evil. The graver defect is that Mind is held inferior to The Good. But "assuredly an infinite power must have an infinite effect."⁴ All this applies in a still more obvious manner in the case of the third principle, Soul.⁵ In both cases, it implies "comparative debility, obscurity and progressive deterioration," and "gradual exhaustion." But this idea of a "fragmentary Deity, a diluted Godhead" is wholly incompatible with the true meaning of the word God.⁶

Finally, and most serious, are the moral consequences of this system, and all systems, "in which the being and

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1. Cf. Table Talk: p.274. "How did the Atheist get his idea of that God whom he denies?"

2. MS.H: pp.163-175.

3. Ibid: pp.175-177.

4. Ibid: pp.177-181.

5. Ibid: pp.183-189.

6. Ibid: pp.187-191.

nature of God and the World are explained on the hypothesis of emanation." For in this scheme good and evil are distinguished by no positive difference, "but by a mere difference in degree." Further, either the idea of guilt is denied, and "with it therefore responsibility, and all the religion of the world" or "by a strange absurdity" crime and evil increase as guilt diminishes due to the degradation of reason. There is no explanation of the fact that it is to the noblest and most intellectual creature alone that we attribute guilt or the possibility of guilt.¹

Coleridge therefore concludes that the neo-Platonic doctrine bears only a verbal resemblance to the Christian doctrine.² There is no gainsaying his conclusion. Moreover, it answers completely the charge of "neo-Platonising philosophical Trinitarianism" levelled by Rigg,³ and concurred in by Benn.⁴ Hort's judgment that the charge was "absolutely false" is vindicated.⁵

In the light of his criticism of the Plotinian doctrine, Coleridge's treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity takes on added interest. Muirhead finds in this theological extension "of his metaphysics" a revival of what is most mediaeval, and perhaps repulsive, in English Platonism,⁶ and feels that "his apologetic interests at this point vitiate Coleridge's results."⁷

1. MS.H: pp.191-195

2. Ibid: p.195.

3. Rigg: Modern Anglican Theology, Chap. II.

4. Benn: The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, I, p.244.

5. Cambridge Essays; p.332.

6. Coleridge as Philosopher: p.115.

7. Ibid: p.116.

Muirhead has in mind speculative results as may be gathered from his words regarding "the power of speculative truth to break through the swaddling-bands of theological dogma."¹

Here, as elsewhere, Muirhead fails to treat with sympathy Coleridge's adherence to the Christian Faith - an adherence which, equally with his love of speculative truth, was the absorbing interest of his mind.

In the Opus Maximum, Coleridge proceeds from his analysis of personality to a discussion of the Trinity. We have seen how, in this analysis, an element of alterity is necessitated for the development of the personality. In the case of the Divine, this is recognized in the doctrine of the Logos.² Continuing the argument from this point, Coleridge allows that his subject-object analysis does not in itself suggest any third element such as the Spirit. But, he argues, if within the Godhead the presence of a "co-eternal being and intelligence" be admitted, then

"it is not possible consistently with such admission to advance any argument against the rationality of the latter nor can any reason be assigned why, seeing

1. Coleridge as Philosopher: p.116.

2. It is difficult to see why Muirhead should in one case commend Coleridge's attempt to find a place for alterity in the infinite (Coleridge as Philosopher: pp.229-230) and on the other hand should censure him for being "involved in the 'metaphysical prolegomena' and Laocoon-like coils of Trinitarian theology" (ibid: p.248). It can only be explained on the basis of Muirhead's aversion to Christian doctrine.

that a procession is possible, and that the circle is not yet closed, we should not proceed till we are led to the point from which we commenced, and in the full sense of a plenitude and sufficiency that precludes all conception of any additional process, find the justification of relinquishing all further attempt."¹

The infinite product of the infinite causality--the alterity--must be real. It is God's co-eternal and adequate Idea of Himself. It is therefore substantial as and consubstantial with God.² But because the term Idea "does not in itself involve relation" it is a "less fit exponent" of the truth it is meant to convey than either Son or Word.³ In fact, the "least inappropriate term and conception" of the divine act is that of begetting; the "most expressive relation" is that of Father and Son.⁴ The Father has communicated Himself absolutely. The Son is no shadow. He is real and has His own form. The Son "co-eternally becomes." This becoming does not mean succession, however.⁵

The act of the Divine Will, "in and by which the Father attributeth his Self to another," is reciprocal. It is not only the act of the Father in "generation and contemplation" directed towards the Son. It is simultaneously

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1. MS.B.3: pp.258-259.

2. Ibid: pp.263-264. Cf. Unpublished Letters, I, pp.355-356 - Letter of October 13, 1806.

3. Ibid: p.264. Cf. Unpublished Letters, II, p.387 - Letter of October 25, 1826.

4. Ibid: p.259.

5. Ibid: p.266.

the act of the Son, referring Himself to the Father, directed towards the Father. This "eternal proceeding" is therefore in nature circular; the *περιχώρησις* of the Greek Fathers.¹ But this "primary, absolute, co-eternal intercirculation" of the Deity is an act. It must have a form as an act. The form must be real and self-subsistent.² Difficulty arises from the thought that all possible forms are exhausted in the first distinction between God and the Word.³

Seeking some term which imports at once being and act, and expresses at the same time that the distinct being is the consequent of the act, Coleridge finds in the analogy of wind and air the term most suggestive.

"The air distinguishing and, as it were, individualizing itself from the air by motion, naturally expresses, we might say instances, being or substance manifesting itself in the form of action, and having its particular or individual being consequent on the act;--this is the Spirit."⁴

Similarly the rational acts of the soul, self-subsistent and not divided from the soul, are distinguished as the spirit. Carried to the highest and eliminating all adulterations,

"we approach to the perfect Idea in the Holy Spirit, that which proceedeth from the Father to the Son, and that which is returned from the Son to the Father, and which in this circulation constitutes the eternal unity in the eternal alterity and distinction."⁵

Coleridge concludes with a re-assertion of the grounds on which is affirmed the necessity of the

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1. MS.B.3: p.268.
 2. Ibid: p.268. Cf. Unpublished Letters, I, p.355.
 3. Ibid: pp.269-271.
 4. Ibid: pp.274-275.
 5. Ibid: p.276.

co-eternal filiation or alterity. The necessity is "the unwithholding and communicative goodness of the Supreme Mind."¹ He communicates Himself wholly to another. Such communication is love. So also is "the re-attribution of that Self to the Communicator." "This too is Love, filial Love,--Love is the Spirit of God, and God is Love."² "Thus we have the Absolute under three distinct ideas, and the essential inseparability of these without interference with their no less interdistinction is the Divine Idea."³ The doctrine is derived from the transcendent unity of God and cannot therefore be inconsistent with that unity. And on the other hand, if the doctrine be denied, the idea of God is reduced to a formless and hollow unity.⁴

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1. MS.B.3: p.278.

2. Ibid: p.278.

3. Ibid: p.279. Cf. Unpublished Letters, I, p.356, where he concludes in similar fashion, "neither of these three can be conceived apart, nor confusedly--so that the Idea of God involves that of a Tri-unity." Cf. his comment on the Nicene and Athanasian formulae:-(Notes Theol., Pol., & Misc., p.44.) "In both there are three self-subsistent and only one self-originated:- which is the substance of the idea of the Trinity." Cf. Ibid: pp.115-116, where he rejects the Athanasian creed on other grounds. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I, pp.216-217; II, p.144seq, for further comments on Nicene Trinitarianism.

4. MS.B.3: pp.279-282.

Cf. Notes on English Divines, I, p.12.- "The Trinity is an idea, and no idea can be rendered by a conception.... The Trinity is the only form in which an idea of God is possible, unless indeed it be a Spinozistic or World-God." Cf. Ibid, II, p.179: "I affirm, that the article of the Trinity is religion, is reason, and its universal formula; and that there neither is, nor can be, any religion, any reason, but what is, or is an expansion of the truth of the Trinity."

Vide Appendix D - Additional Material re Coleridge's Doctrine of the Trinity.

This is all, Coleridge holds, that can be said from the side of philosophy. The practical necessity of the doctrine of the Trinity, which, "and not its truth merely", constitutes it an article of faith, can be affirmed only on religious grounds. The doctrines of redemption and the divinity of the Redeemer are positions "mutually supporting and requiring each other."¹ To what extent this latter interest determined his thought in affirming the necessity of an ontological view of the Trinity will be seen in the chapter on Christianity and Redemption.

With regard to the argument itself, it is admittedly speculative, but the speculation has the merit of avoiding the dangers of tri-theism on the one hand, and of conceiving God as a solitary unit on the other. God is eternally Father and eternally Son, moving within the eternal life of Spirit. And as Paterson remarks,

"The divine holiness acquires a new depth and sanctity when we conceive of the Godhead also as involving a communion of Persons who reverently find, each in each, the plenitude of the Divine Being and attributes."²

Moreover, the argument is not subject to the weakness inherent in the Hegelian thesis of the world or universe as the "other."³

On the other hand, Coleridge does not make clear the relation of the Logos to revelation and to the person of Jesus Christ. Nor--as will be seen--does a review

1. MS.B.3: pp.282-283.

2. Paterson: The Rule of Faith, p.221.

3. ex. gr. Biedermann.

of the passages in which Coleridge relates redemption to God make the matter clearer. Coleridge in this instance is content to rest in an affirmation. It may be that he planned a fuller discussion of this in a later section. It is at least certain that all he is concerned with at this point is to deal with the question from the side of philosophy and to establish a rational basis for the doctrine. But judged as it stands, Coleridge's view of the Trinity suffers from lack of contact with the Christian doctrine which he sets out to establish.

V. The Relation of God to Man.

Closely allied to Coleridge's belief in the personality of God stands his belief in the efficacy of prayer. The two are, in fact, different aspects of the same basic belief. Religion is a personal relation between God and man. Prayer is that relation in expression. It is faith in action. But prayer involves petition, and this demands some "belief" concerning God's relation to the universe. Belief in prayer then must face, on the intellectual plane at least, the difficulties involved in the scientific view of the world as determined by undeviating law. Coleridge was well aware of this difficulty. Towards the end of his life, as his journal shows, he gave much thought to the whole question. A long entry in the Semina Rerum, dated March 6, 1832¹, is typical of his method of meeting the problem.

1. MS.C: pp.159-166.

Starting from his general definition of faith as fidelity of the personal will to the reason,-- "reason in the form of Conscience, the conscience in the light of reason,"--Coleridge proceeds to the question of how far this faith requires the support of "belief." The answer is that "ordinarily Faith implies Belief; but not always, nor of necessity."¹ There are three possible positions: faith against belief, faith without belief, and faith with belief.

In the first place,² the mind "may have so accustomed itself to contemplate God as a God of Order," i.e., God as the supreme Mind and Reason underlying law and order, that it will with difficulty adjust itself to the idea that God is "a God that heareth prayer." The proofs of this latter position "rest so almost wholly in the Individual's own secret persuasion," that the faith itself is the main evidence of the truth of the faith.³ Hence reason might easily reduce any providential act of God to a case of casual coincidence.

The question resolves itself into the inquiry concerning the nature of God and the relation in which man

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1. MS.C: p.159.
 2. Ibid: pp.159-160.
 3. Ibid: p.160.

stands to Him. If God be generalized from the laws of the universe as "a transcendent Abstract", or "Absolute Necessity", or "Eternal Scheme of inherent Law", then man stands in relation to God in the same way as he does to the law of gravity.¹ But, on the other hand, man sees plainly "that if God be not a God that heareth Prayer, a God who seeketh that which was lost, he is relatively to the Creature no God, at all."² The intellectual theism which finds in God "a mere word of generalization" is moral and practical atheism. Thus when some moral issue is at stake, conscience takes possession of the whole man and faith exists without belief³--i.e., without the support of the intellect or understanding. Such was the case with Kant.

But this "permissive" faith in God is not satisfactory to Coleridge in the face of discord between the intellect and the moral being.⁴ In the second place, therefore, he suggests a re-examination of the premises in the process of reasoning.⁵ If, by reference to his own act of self-affirmation, he discovers that "he had arbitrarily assumed Reason and Truth, as the Absolute First" then he must admit something prior to all true being, "an antecedent, self-originated as well as self-subsistent." This "ungrounded and groundless Ground of all Being" can only be conceived as

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1. MS.C: pp.160-161. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II, p.6.
 2. Ibid: p.161.
 3. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II, p.54.
 4. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.231.--where a paraphrased analysis is quoted as Coleridge's own argument.
 5. MS.C: pp.162-163.

"Will and Good--the Holy Will, the Absolute Good." As the eternal cause of all reality, it affirms itself by an eternal act and begets truth, being and reason, "as the Alterity to the Identity;" and life, individuality, love and spirit as the "Community."¹ God is not just a mere generalization of law. As the Supreme Reason, He is the substance, "the noumenon of which all the Laws of Nature are the perspective and revealing Phaenomena." He is perpetually present as the Supreme Will; and also as the Supreme Spirit. The Spirit relates to life and individuality, and "is therefore conceivable only in relation to Individuality. (The Spirit is not for All; but for Each and Every.)" The conclusion is

"that as the universal Gravity does not exclude, but include all the specific Gravities, even so with the Law and the influence of Prayer--for our limited faculties only are they in antithesis."²

Finally, there is the third possibility--faith with belief.³ Man, though emancipated from the power of the understanding, finds it possible to enlist its "aidance." In view, however, of its uncertainty, through its close alliance with the senses, the moral reason is usually content with the neutrality of the understanding. Man's highest act is to affirm that God hears prayer.

1. MS.C: p.162. Coleridge gives the scheme in the form of a "Tetractys."

	<u>Identity</u>	
	The Absolute Will, the Good.	
<u>Ipseity</u>		<u>Alterity</u>
The I AM		Being, Truth, the
The Father		Supreme Mind, the
The Supreme Will		only begotten Word.
	<u>Community</u>	
	Life, Love the Holy Spirit.	

2. Ibid: p.163.

3. Ibid: pp.164-165.

"The purest act of the finite Will made personal in the individual I AM, submitting itself to the Reason¹ as the representative of the Holy Will, and in it of the Universal Reason, is the Faith that the Ground and Cause of the Universe is a God that heareth Prayer, a God who seeketh that which was lost and calleth back that which had gone astray.....Who hath framed the heart of Man to love and to seek him, and shall he not love the creature whom for the purposes of Love he made, and not aid the searcher?"²

Here is faith with belief. The belief "derives its origin and stability wholly from the antecedent Faith."³ In other words, man at his highest level realizes that God must be a God capable of maintaining ethical relations with men and who works for good in the world by redemptive means. And this demand of the religious spirit is rooted deep in the very nature of man. It derives from the primary act of the soul--an act of faith; which act of faith is conscience, "the soul's testimony of its' own reality."⁴

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1. N.B. Not merely the universal.

2. MS.C: p.165. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II, p.128. Cf. the 1806 letter:- "For if God with the Spirit of God created the Soul of Man as far as it was possible according to his own Likeness, and if he be an omnipresent Influence, it necessarily follows, that his action on the Soul of Man must awake in it a conscious(ness) of actions within itself analogous to the divine action; and that therefore the Spirit of God truly bears witness to the Spirit of Man, even as vice versa the awakened Spirit will bear witness to the Spirit of God." (Unpublished Letters, I, pp.359-360.)

3. MS.C: p.163. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II, p.128.

4. Ibid: p.117. Cf. the 1806 Letter to Clarkson - Unpublished Letters, I, pp.359-360.

Belief, in the last resort, is concerned with ideas, that is, with ends--God, holiness, truth, love, beauty, immortality. The Christian element in Coleridge's thought, seen in the latter part of the quotation above, breaks through again as he affirms, "Christ, the only be-gotten Word, is.....the Idea Idearum, the living and adequate Image of the Father.....As the Idea Dei Absoluta, he is the Ultimate End, all ultimate Ends in one."¹

Coleridge concludes with a prayer, closing with:- "Of all the truths of Faith the most precious to the afflicted Soul is the Faith, that thou art a God that hearest prayer."² It is an affirmation of his fundamental religious realism. It appears as the third article in his 1832 Confession of Faith--the third moment of the Christian faith. It is the "triumph of faith." Without this belief, "prayer would be folly--Sin and the Fruits of Sin, irredeemable Hell."³

In his section on "God as Special Providence," Dr. Muirhead pays tribute to Coleridge's argument:

"If prayer in the sense of petition for something for which the physical and moral constitution of the world, as we ordinarily know it, makes no provision, is to be vindicated, we may agree that it must be along some such lines as he here indicates."⁴

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1. MS.C: p.165.
 2. Ibid: p.166.
 3. Ibid: p.151.
 4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.232.

Coleridge's argument, as Muirhead points out, goes beyond the ordinary pragmatic view of the control of events by the "will to believe," by recognizing the existence of an external reality in identification with which our wills attain true individuality,--"Whose service is perfect freedom."

On the other hand, Muirhead asks whether Coleridge is not too much dominated by the Kantian dualism between sensory experience as determined by mechanical conceptions and the spiritual as something extraneous to the natural region. He continues in implicit criticism by arguing that the Whole must be spiritual and therefore in the end providential. Hence,

"It is not by having things altered from without that we have to seek the goal of union with Its spirit, but by accepting them, whether in the natural or the moral world, just as they are and turning them to the ends of the spirit."¹

Petitionary prayer is, to Muirhead, "the assertion of our will." He therefore indicts Coleridge for including petition. But, it may be asked, is all petitionary prayer necessarily the assertion of our will? Is it necessarily an attempt to get "things altered from without?" Surely the petition for forgiveness cannot be classified so, and this, it must be remembered, is the primary concern of Coleridge. From what Muirhead says elsewhere, it seems certain that a misunderstanding of the Christian doctrine of forgiveness lies at the root of his criticism of Coleridge's conception of prayer. Forgiveness,

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.233.

to Muirhead, apparently involves "the cancellation of the incidents of time."¹ Coleridge's prayers for forgiveness he holds are traceable to morbidness.²

But Coleridge had a far clearer insight into the meaning of forgiveness. What troubled him was the broken relation with God. This must be rectified, and--as his own experience revealed to him--rectified by God in redemptive action. This involves forgiveness of sins. And forgiveness must be grounded in a God "that heareth prayer", and "who seeketh that which was lost." Faith in Providence lies at the heart of Coleridge's thought of God and forms the staple of his religion. In other words, Coleridge's conception of the nature of God and his relation to man, is in the last resort, not only theistic, but Christian.

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1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.220.
 2. Ibid: p.36.

CHAPTER VII.

The Problem of Evil.

1. Early Discussion.

"Woe to the man to whom it is an uninteresting question," wrote Coleridge regarding the problem of evil.¹ This was in 1803, when he was experiencing in full measure what may be called the tragic element in life. His sin was ever before him.² Sin and evil could never be uninteresting questions to him. Typical of his attitude is the letter written in 1820 to his friend, J. H. Green, after a sickness which Coleridge regarded as a 'summons:'

"My only ray of hope is this, that in my inmost heart, as far as my consciousness can sound its depths, I plead nothing but my utter and sinful helplessness and worthlessness on one side, and the infinite mercy and divine Humanity of our Creator and Redeemer crucified from the beginning of the world, on the other! 'In relation to God I appear to myself the same as the very worst man, if such there be, would appear to an earthly tribunal.' I mean no comparatives; for what have a man's permanent concerns to do with comparison?"³

That sin was his permanent concern may be seen from the Journal entries of his later life. To quote again an entry of 1830—

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1. Anima Poetae, p.41.
 2. The events lying back of this have been discussed in Chapter II.
 3. Letters, II. pp.706-707.

"Oh!—that in the outset of life I could have felt as well as known the consequences of Sin and error, before their tyranny had commenced."¹ This same sense of sin is voiced also in his prayers. Typical is the prayer of March 8, 1832, in which Coleridge speaks of "the sinful self-condemned Soul" whose only recourse is in God "abundant in forgiveness and in Judgment remembering Mercy."²

The reality of his sense of sin has never been called in question by his critics. They have differed as to its significance. Typical of one school of criticism is that of Benn. He writes satirically,

"One can understand that the sense of sin conceived as an overwhelming fatality should have been particularly active with Coleridge. It is less intelligible that he should have generalized this deep and well-founded consciousness of his own delinquencies into a comprehensive indictment of human nature as such; and that he should have regarded the spirit of the Gospel as a cure for the world at large when it was proving so totally inoperative in his own particular instance."³

But, as Muirhead has seen,⁴ the point is otherwise. Coleridge was not playing the role of prosecutor, seeking a bill of indictment of the human race. Rather, to continue the metaphor, he was the prisoner at the bar, entering a plea of guilty, and throwing himself on the mercy of the court. He desired above all pardon and redemption. As Maurice said of him, "Besides being a philosopher, he was a penitent."⁵

1. MS.C, p.143.

2. Ibid: p.173.

3. Benn: The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century, I. p.239.

4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.37n.

5. Maurice: Life of Frederick Denison Maurice, II. p.194.

Benn's criticism falls to the ground, if for no other reason than that the problem was an intriguing intellectual problem before ever he felt deeply conscious of his own sin. It is not necessary to take too seriously the schoolboy lines concerning,

"bitter-smiling Woe
Which all mankind are born to know."¹

They probably reflect an accepted orthodoxy. Of more import is the letter to George Dyer, written early in 1795. Writing of the contrast between rural urban life, Coleridge says, "Almost all the physical Evil in the World depends on the existence of moral Evil."² It is not necessary to discuss here the theory of a causal nexus between physical and moral evil set forth by Coleridge in this letter. The point is that the problem was present to his mind early in 1795. Later in the same year he included a discussion of "The Origin of Evil" in his first theological lecture at Bristol.³ Further evidence is supplied by the so-called "Gutch" Notebook of 1795-1798. Among its miscellaneous entries, there is to be found a list of projected works. It includes the entry, "The Origin of Evil, an Epic Poem."⁴ Further on in the same notebook, there is marked for future reading Butterworth's Origin of Evil.⁵

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1. Poems, p.1. The poem is dated May, 12, 1787, and is the first known poem of Coleridge.
 2. Unpublished Letters, I. p.32.
 3. Cottle: Early Recollections, I. p.27.
 4. British Museum Add. Mss. 27, 901. Folio 21a. Printed in Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen. 97. p.351.
 5. Ibid: Folio 89a. Printed in Archiv etc. p.372. The date of Butterworth's book is 1792.

Even by 1798 the question of guilt was not the pressing personal problem of his later years. The very letter from which Benn has taken his phrase, 'the spirit of the gospel as a cure for the world,' is significant.

"Of guilt I say nothing," he wrote to George Coleridge, "but I believe most steadfastly in original sin; that from our mothers' wombs our understandings are darkened; and even where our understandings are in the light, that our organization is depraved and our volitions imperfect; and we sometimes see the good without wishing to attain it, and oftener wish it without the energy that wills and performs. And for this inherent depravity I believe that the spirit of the Gospel is the sole cure."¹

By 1803 the dream of the epic poem had faded, but the problem was beginning to assume a deeper meaning, under the stress of his own experience. "I made out," he says in a notebook entry, "the whole business of the origin of evil satisfactory to my own mind."² This entry gives a delightful picture of Coleridge sitting for his portrait for Hazlitt, all the while he expounded the 'whole business of the origin of evil' to the young painter. To Coleridge, the metaphysical argument reduces itself to the question,

1. Letters, I. pp.241-242.

Cf. Coleridge's Bristol Lecture printed in Essays on his own Times, I. pp.22-23.

An interesting parallel to this discussion is Lowes' refutation of Robertson's thesis that The Ancient Mariner was the "abnormal product of an abnormal nature under abnormal conditions," i.e., due to opium. (Robertson: New Essays towards a Critical Method, p.187. Lowes proves conclusively that Robertson's thesis is without foundation. (The Road to Xanadu, pp.414-425.)

2. Anima Poetae, p.36.

"Why did not infinite Power always exclusively produce such beings as in each moment of their duration were infinite? why, in short, did not the Almighty create an absolutely infinite number of Almighties,"¹

Coleridge argues that those who impeach the power and goodness of God, claiming a weakness in the one or the other, rest their justification on an argument "which has nothing to do with vice and misery, as vice and misery."² The whole case hinges on the notion of creatability. He asks whether something more than infinity of number, sorts, and orders is not demanded of infinite power; and answers that there is still room in the imagination for the creation of finites. Confronted with the bewilderment of notions of infinity applied to numbers, the imagination turns to contemplate a world, "an harmonious system, where an infinity of kinds subsist each in a multitude of individuals apportionate to its kind in conformity to laws existing in the divine nature, and therefore in the nature of things."³ If the admission be made that conceive is equivalent to creation in the divine nature, synonymous with beget, then "all difficulty ceases....all is clear and beautiful."⁴

Admitting this to be a notebook entry, awaiting amplification, still it is by no means as clear as Coleridge optimistically asserts. A later entry returns again to the "sophism of imaginary change in a case of positive substitution," and insists on the "necessity of omniform harmonious

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1. Anima Poetae, p.36.
 2. Ibid: p.38.
 3. Ibid: p.39.
 4. Ibid: p.40.

action."¹ "Order and system (not number—in itself base, disorderly and irrational) define the creative energy."² From the standpoint of his developed theory, these entries are of interest as foreshadowing the argument in the Opus Maximum.

A note-book entry of December 1803 is of interest in the light of modern psychological theories. The entry reads,

"I will at least make the attempt to explain to myself the origin of moral evil from the streamy nature of association, which thinking curbs and rudders. Do not the bad passions in dreams throw light and show of proof upon this hypothesis? If I can but explain those passions I shall gain light, I am sure. A clue! A clue!"³

But the clue, as far as can be seen, was never followed up. Years were to pass before Freud came to seize upon the self-same clue. However, with the conclusions of the New Psychology Coleridge—it may be said with some degree of certainty—would have been in sharp disagreement; for the question of guilt and responsibility, passed over in 1798, became in his later years a major problem in his own experience. His final break with Schelling, as has been seen,⁴ dates from the time when he came to realize the implications of pantheism with regard to human responsibility.

The belief in an original corruption in human nature, which Coleridge had voiced in 1802,⁵ became by 1816 a

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1. Anima Poetae, p.42.
 2. Ibid: p.42
 3. Ibid: p.55.
 4. Vide Chapter II.
 5. Unpublished Letters, I. pp.201-203.

fixed article of his personal creed. The first three articles assert his belief in freedom, God and immortality—the Kantian postulates. This constitutes his creed as a finite rational being. The first article in his creed "as a Christian" reads,

"I believe, and hold it as the fundamental article of Christianity, that I am a fallen creature; that I am of myself capable of moral evil, but not of myself capable of moral good, and that an evil ground existed in my will, previously to any given act, or assignable moment of time, in my consciousness..... This fearful mystery I pretend not to understand. I cannot even conceive the possibility of it—but I know that it is so. My conscience, the sole fountain of certainty, commands me to believe it, and would it-self be a contradiction, were it not so—and what is real must be possible."¹

In later life, sin is to him one of the two moments of the Christian Religion. He regards original sin and redemption as "that the ground, this the Superstructure of our faith."² These two moments are repeated in a Confession of Faith, dated 1832, and found in his Semina Rerum.³ Coleridge was quite aware of the paradox in the whole question,—a bias towards sin in human nature coupled with a sense of moral responsibility on the part of the individual man. His own sense of moral responsibility was too great to allow him to rest in the position of contemporary orthodoxy—guilt inherited.

1. Table Talk, pp.430-431.

2. Aids, p.206.

3. MS.C, p.150. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.198.—
"Christianity itself, which rests on the two articles of faith; first, the necessity, and secondly, the reality of a Redeemer."

II. The Question of Original Sin.

It is this sense of moral responsibility no less than the frankly apologetic aim which underlies Coleridge's treatment of original sin in the Aids to Reflection of 1825. The immediate occasion of his remarks is his examination of a passage in Jeremy Taylor's Deus Justificatus. Coleridge makes use of the passage as a foil for his own argument.¹

The clue to Coleridge's treatment is given in a phrase which occurs late in the discussion, where Coleridge writes of the "monstrous fiction of Hereditary Sin,—guilt inherited."² This repeats his comment on the theologians who "perverted original sin into hereditary guilt."³ It is to be noted that Coleridge does not argue concerning the fact of sin. It is a fact attested by every religion, and those who deny the fact in virtue acknowledge it.⁴

Sin, to Coleridge, is a matter of the will. It is moral evil. Moral evil originates in a will. "A moral Evil

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1. Aids, pp.172-200. Cf. Taylor: Deus Justificatus; or a Vindication of the Glory of the Divine Attributes in the Question of Original Sin, Against the Presbyterian Way of Understanding it. The passage in question may be found in Heber's edition, 1822. IX. pp.315-316. Coleridge has altered the text slightly. (Aids, p.175n.)
N.B. An illuminating commentary on the discussion in the Aids is afforded by Coleridge's marginal comments on Taylor, which, fortunately, have been preserved.
 2. Ibid: p.200. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.261. where he speaks of "the phantom of hereditary guilt."
 3. Notes on English Divines, I. p.247.
 4. Aids, pp.188-189.

is an evil that has its origin in a Will."¹ This originating will cannot be God.² Nor can the origin be attributed to nature,³ for, as has been seen, Coleridge holds that nature is bound by cause and effect and cannot originate.⁴ The idea of will alone contains the idea of self-determination.⁵ Hence, Coleridge objects to the phrase original sin as a pleonasm. "For if it be sin, it must be original." Any state or act, to be considered sin, must have its origin in the will. Otherwise, it may be classed as calamity, deformity, disease or mischief,⁶ but not as sin.

Coleridge holds that the will must be ultimately self-determined or it ceases to be a will under the law of perfect freedom.⁷ Moreover, as life is known by being, so will is known by acting.⁸ Now, if by some act, the possibility of which is always present in a free agent, the will becomes subject to the "determination of nature," that is, what is below it, it "receives a nature into itself and so far it becomes a nature."⁹ This constitutes a corruption of the will.¹⁰ In fact, the "admission of a nature into a spiritual essence by its own act is a corruption."¹¹ The corrupt nature of the will

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1. Aids, p.192.
 2. Ibid: p.180.
 3. Ibid: p.180.
 4. Ibid: p.176n. Vide Chapter IV. section IV.
 5. Ibid: p.190.
 6. Ibid: p.178.
 7. Ibid: p.190.
 8. Ibid: p.177n.
 9. Ibid: p.190.
 10. Ibid: p.190.
 11. Ibid: p.180.

is recognized as the "ground, condition, and common Cause of all Sins."¹ But inasmuch as the will is ultimately self-determined, this corrupt nature must be regarded in some sense as its own act.² This, then, is original sin. Thus, Coleridge is driven back from sin to evil nature to will. But the will which originated the evil nature must be itself evil, that is evil by nature. As Coleridge says himself, "Thus we might go back from act to act, from evil to evil, ad infinitum, without advancing a step."³ The conclusion reached is that original sin is ultimately a "mystery," "problem, of which any other solution, than the statement of the Fact itself, was demonstrably impossible."⁴ Original sin is "an unaccountable fact,"⁵ and in one place, Coleridge even writes of original sin as an idea and therefore not adequately expressible in words.⁶

III. Every Man his own Adam.

This "unaccountable fact" has, however, this to be said of it. Moral evil is common to all. Moreover, "an evil common to all must have a ground common to all."⁷ The ground must be in a will; it cannot be in the divine will; therefore it must be referred to the will of man.⁸ Coleridge

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1. Aids, p.180.
 2. Ibid: p.180.
 3. Ibid: p.190.
 4. Ibid: p.189.
 5. Notes on English Divines, I. p.259.
 6. Ibid: I. pp.263-264.
 7. Aids, p.192.
 8. Ibid: p.192.

therefore holds that this constitutes the fall of man, inasmuch as the will is the ground and condition of man's personality.¹

Moreover,

"the ground work of personal Being is a capacity of acknowledging the Moral Law (the Law of the Spirit, the Law of Freedom, the Divine Will) as that which should, of itself, suffice to determine the Will to a free obedience of the law.....What ever resists, and, as a positive force, opposes this in the Will is therefore evil."²

For the individual, this cannot be on account of Adam, but may be spoken of legitimately as a consequence of Adam's fall, "a link in the historic chain of instances, whereof Adam is the first."³ Nor can it be due to an evil principle inserted or infused into one will by the will of another, the will in such case being no will.⁴

The theory of a causal nexus is ruled out for another reason, namely, that this theory would relate sin to the category of time, and Coleridge holds that in questions concerning the will, the categories of time and space are irrelevant.

"The subject stands in no relation whatever to time, can neither be called in time nor out of time; but that all relations of time are as alien and heterogeneous in this question, as the relations and attributes of space.....are to our affections and moral feelings."⁵

Although sin is revealed in deeds, that is, in time, basically, "Time is not with things of spirit."⁶

1. Aids, p.190.

2. Ibid: p.190.

3. Ibid: p.194.

4. Ibid: p.194.

5. Ibid: p.191.

6. Notes on English Divines, I. p.261. Vide Chapter III. section IV.

Coleridge thus comes to the conclusion that "it belongs to the very essence of the doctrine, that in respect of Original Sin, every man is the adequate representative of all men."¹ Interpreting the first chapters of Genesis symbolically, Coleridge holds that "the first human sinner is the adequate representative of all his successors", and that it is "the same Adam that falls in every man."² "What Adam did, we all do."³ The condition of the will which is the ground of original sin is, therefore, "not peculiar to the individual agent, but common to the human race."⁴ Coleridge construes Adam genetically as well as symbolically.⁵

In the Aids, Coleridge's concern with the doctrine of original sin is to find "the sense in which alone it is binding" on a Christian's faith.⁶ In seeking thus to retain the doctrine by re-interpreting the meaning of the words, Coleridge leaves himself open to the charge of neglecting altogether the technical ecclesiastical meaning of the phrase, original sin. Nor is it better than a sophism to empty the phrase of its technical meaning and then to equate original with originated. But this aside, the treatment has certain features which are undoubtedly sound. Coleridge saw the necessity of grounding sin in human volition. The religious interest at stake in

1. Aids, p.194.

2. Ibid: p.172n.

3. Notes on English Divines, I. p.262.

4. Ibid: I. p.263.

5. Aids, p.194.

6. Ibid: p.195.

the concept of guilt is thus safe-guarded. It may be true, as Orchard contends, that Coleridge's use of will is faulty and that he neglects the factor of development in connection with the will.¹ This may be granted, but Orchard neglects to give Coleridge his due for refusing to accept a view of sin that would make it an inheritance from nature. Coleridge's stress is on the will as distinct from nature. Moreover, as distinct from nature, will is not subject to the ordinary laws of nature, conceived in terms of space and time.² Coleridge's insistence on will as a category distinct from those of time and space is a fruitful suggestion. Both Tennant and Orchard have seized on this as reflecting Kant's view of sin as a timeless act. They, in fact, assume that Coleridge is but echoing Kant.³ Coleridge was acquainted with Kant's Religion within the Bounds of Pure Reason.⁴ But his divergence from Kant makes it equally clear that here, as elsewhere, he was not merely an English parrot of the German philosopher.⁵ Coleridge is more concerned with actual experience than is Kant, aloof in his stoical intellectualism. Sin is inherent in man and manifest in deeds in time and space. But because it is rooted in the will, it is

1. Orchard: Modern Theories of Sin, p.48.

2. Vide Chapter III. section IV.

3. Tennant: The Origin and Propagation of Sin, pp.58-59;
Orchard: op.cit., p.46.

4. Biographia Literaria, p.70.

5. Orchard devotes a half-page of criticism to the "Timeless Act" of "all human wills collectively." (op.cit., p.48) Neither phrase occurs in Coleridge. They are taken over from a footnote of Tennant. (op.cit., p.59). Orchard's looseness is further emphasized by his failure to quote Tennant correctly.

not subject to the ordinary laws of space-time causation—laws invoked by contemporary orthodoxy to explain hereditary guilt. Each man is responsible for his own sin. Coleridge is also aware of the social character of sin. He avoids the individualism so fatal to Pelagianism and one of the chief weaknesses in Kant's view.¹ On the other hand, Coleridge, like Kant, breaks completely with the shallow optimism of the preceding age.

Again, Coleridge's symbolic interpretation of the early Biblical narratives strikes a new and helpful note in an age of literalism. His interpretation of Adam as the representative of all men, and his stress on the Adam in each, point the way to moral and religious reality. The ultimate ground of human sin, common to the race, remains a mystery. As an apologetic for his age, Coleridge's treatment may be said to be fruitful in suggestion. It is not, nor does it claim to be, a complete discussion of the problem of sin and evil. It is concerned only with finding a sense for the words by means of which the fact of sin may be brought home to each man and the doctrine itself retained in the Christian creed.

IV. The Origin of Evil.

The treatment in the Aids, suggestive on the whole for the purpose of a Christian apologetic, left deep problems still unsolved. "The origin of evil," he had written

1. Cf. Tennant: op.cit., pp.50-59.

in the Aids, "is a question interesting only to the metaphysician, and in a system of moral and religious philosophy."¹ It was to this question that Coleridge set himself in his unfinished Opus Maximum. In the chapter entitled On the Divine Ideas² he faces squarely the problem presented by his own system of moral and religious philosophy founded on the idea of an Absolute Will. Dr. Muirhead, after examining this chapter, reaches the conclusion that "there are few things of equal power in the literature of Theism."³ This is high praise. To what extent it is justified, the following summary will reveal.

Coleridge commences in typical fashion by "disclaiming all wish and attempt of gratifying a speculative refinement" in himself.⁴ He then proceeds to state the problem as one of finiteness. The problem is that of "presenting an intelligible though not comprehensible idea of the possibility of that which in some sense or other is, yet is not God, nor One with God."⁵ The phrase not comprehensible he proceeds to justify by reference to the hidden mystery in every form of existence.⁶ This mystery, when examined apart from the conceptual relations of time and space, and seen in the depth of real being, is revealed as a "That which is not, but which is for ever only about to be."⁷ This mystery is illustrated by

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1. Aids, p.170.
 2. MS. H. pp.3-145.
 3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.242.
 4. MS.H. p.3.
 5. Ibid: p.5.
 6. Ibid: p.7.
 7. Ibid: p.9.

the "infinite problem" presented even by a dew-drop.¹ From this Coleridgean digression, the argument returns to the main problem.

"The passage from the absolute to the separated finite, this is the difficulty which who shall overcome? This is the chasm, which ages have tried in vain to over-bridge. If the finite be in no sense separate from the infinite, if it be one with the same, whence proceeded Evil?"²

The bridge offered by the definition of the finite as negation or privation will not do. The shapes of the living forms of nature are "at once the product, and the sign of the positive power" at the root.³ It is only in the inanimate that a form or shape "proceeding from negation" is found. This results from an over-powering impression from without, and may be seen in such examples as the arrow in the air, the storm-rent fragment of rock, and the tide-rounded pebble. Even granted that the finite were negation, the question of its possibility would still return. "From such a finite we might educe the origin of Evil: but such a finite were Evil!"⁴

Coleridge claims that this is the knot which has been cut, rather than untied, by all schemes of pantheism and atheism.⁵ The narrow isthmus to be passed has on either side atheism and pantheism. The point of departure is that: "The Will, the Absolute Will, is that which is essentially

1. MS.H. p.9. Printed Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.277.
 2. Ibid: p.11.
 3. Ibid: p.13.
 4. Ibid: p.15.
 5. Ibid: pp.15, 23.

causative of reality, essentially and absolutely, that is, boundless from without and from within."¹ This same principle has been affirmed and supposed in all the great and stirring epochs of the Christian theology.² Bearing in mind the moral and religious interest, Coleridge refuses to set up the Absolute Will distinct from, and superior to, God. The following long quotation illustrates how Coleridge faces the problem of evil in its ultimate and most difficult form.³

"In the Absolute Will we conceive what in God as the Supreme Being, as the Divine Person, we could not admit if we dared, for it would involve a contradiction; and we dared not if we could, for it would introduce imperfection into the reality of Deity. For in God as God the Absolute Will is absolutely realized, but the actual alone is absolutely real, and the possible, therefore, or potential, as contradistinguished from the actual, and which in all lower than Deity is the opposite pole of the actual, cannot be in God.....Whatever is in God as one with God is, and can be, such only as far as it is actual: but in the Absolute Will, which abideth in the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, totally and absolutely in each, one and the same in all, the ground of all reality is contained, even of that which is only possible and conditionally possible alone: and this is indeed implied in the idea and essential conception of a Will, for a Will, in which there is no possibility, ceases to be a Will absolutely. Hence, in speaking of the Will self-realized, which is more than the Will conceived absolutely, we do not hesitate to affirm the necessity of the divine Nature and attributes,—nay, we affirm it with the clearest insight that such necessity is the perfection and proper prerogative of God. It is impossible for God not to be God, and it is impossible for a part which is one with the whole to be other than the whole as long as it remains one with the whole. It does not however follow that in the part as a part, there should not be contained the conditional possibility of willing to be a part that is not one with the whole, of willing to be in itself, and not in another, for this is not precluded in the Will, or in a realization of the Will through and in the Divine Will: it is precluded only by the absolute self-realization of the Absolute Will."⁴

1. MS.H. p.21.

2. Ibid: p.23.

3. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.239.

4. MS.H. pp.23-29.

It is this possibility of willing to be a part that is not one with the whole that Coleridge sets himself to elucidate. He starts from the doctrine of divine ideas. "An Idea is not simply knowledge or perception as distinguished from the thing perceived: it is a realizing knowledge, a knowledge causative of its own reality."¹ It is light, self-subsistent and living, $\phi\omega\varsigma \nu\omicron\epsilon\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu \kappa\alpha\iota \nu\omicron\gamma\tau\omicron\acute{\omicron}\nu$, a light at once "intelligent and intelligible, and the communicative medium."² To suppose God without ideas, or the realizing knowledge of all the particular forms potentially involved in the absolute causativeness, would destroy the very conception of God.³ The universal and the particular, the possible and the actual, are all contained in the "whole plenitude."⁴ Difficulty arises when the nature of the reality of each is considered. The idea is a form of will, and that in a sphere which admits only of supreme or perfect reality, since "all perfect reality is found in the Absolute only."⁵ Here, then, is the crux of the problem.

In this dilemma a clue is afforded from "the analogy of the highest intuitions or ideas in our minds."⁶ This suggests the possibility of solution.

"To God the idea is real, inasmuch as it is one with that Will which, as we see in its definition, is verily Idem et Alter; but to itself the idea is absolutely real, in so far only as its particular Will affirms, and, in affirming, constitutes its particular reality to have no

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1. MS. H, p.31.
 2. Ibid: p.33.
 3. Ibid: p.33.
 4. Ibid: pp.33-35.
 5. Ibid: p.37.
 6. Ibid: p.37.

true being, except as a form of the universal, and one with the universal Will. This, however, is the affirmation of a Will and of a particular Will. It must therefore contain the potentiality, that is, the power of possibly not affirming the identity of its reality with the reality of God, which is actual absolutely."¹

In other words, if the essence of its being be will, and this will under a particular form, there must be the possibility of willing the universal or absolute under the predominance of the particular, instead of willing the particular solely as the glory and presentation of the universal.

As long as this act remains wholly potential, Coleridge argues that it is perfectly compatible with the reality of God, and "so long therefore hath it an actual reality as one of the eternal immutable ideas of God."² But in the will to actualize this potentiality, in the will to convert this possibility into a reality, it necessarily makes—itself.³ That is to say, a self is affirmed that is not God. In thus making a self that is not God all actuality is lost, since all actuality is contained in God. All that is left is potentiality, by virtue of the eternal nature of will. A world of contradiction results from this first act which, in constituting a self, is in essence a contradiction,⁴—"the Will, to make a centre which is not a centre, a will not the same with the Absolute Will, and yet not contained in the Absolute, that is an Absolute that is not an Absolute."

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1. MS. H, p.39. Printed Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.278-279.
 2. Ibid: p.41.
 3. Ibid: p.41.
 4. Ibid: pp.41-43.

To this difficulty, Coleridge feels that his trichotomous principle of logic offers a solution. He refuses to accept the logic which would divide the world into actual and potential, and equate this division with that of real and unreal. On such a basis, the problem is insoluble. But, argues Coleridge, if these two opposites, the actual and the potential, be the two opposite poles of one reality, the question assumes a totally different aspect.¹ Thus it is possible to predicate reality of the potential, and to claim for any subject that its being is actual, as far as it is in the being of God, and potential in relation to itself as particular existence.² Coleridge asks whether the infinity of images, thoughts, acts, emotions, of which he is capable, be not "as really potential" as such images, acts and states of affection, which are present, are "really actual."³ Failure to recognize this results in one of two positions: either the "futilities" of the mind and nature must be regarded as nothings, or the "absolute universal Thing of Atheism," which blots out all distinction between finite and infinite, must be accepted.⁴ Neither, however, is acceptable.

When the conception provided by his polar logic is taken along with the idea of the will, a key is supplied for the problem.

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1. MS. H, pp.49-51.
 2. Ibid: pp.61-63.
 3. Ibid: pp.52-53.
 4. Ibid: pp.53-59.

"Now here is what was with no unseemly fear and inward trembling named the abyss or abyssmal mystery, that there is in the causative Allmight of God (who shall dare utter it? or if he feel permitted, in what terms shall he utter it? Shall he say) a more than God, or a less than God, and yet more in the sense other, a somewhat that God did not realize in himself, for the real containeth both the actual and the potential, but in God as God, by the necessity of his absolute perfection, there is no potentiality."¹

Coleridge argues that it is possible to speak of God as having power as against his being power. It is by this power that God produces "that, which could not be save in him, but which he is not."² Such are all beings in whom the potential co-exists as "alternable" with the actual. And such may be considered as realization of the will, by virtue of its being their common essence.³ By this line of argument, Coleridge holds that he is able to avoid the conception of a chaotic depth begetting the Deity, "a Not-Good, which yet is not Evil, a Not-Intelligent, which is not the contrary of Intelligence... before the evolution of the Good and Wise."⁴

Moreover, the religious and moral conscience demand two things. In the first place, the reality of the existence of distinct beings within the divine plenitude must be maintained. The essence of these distinct beings is will. Their actuality consists therefore in their will being one with the will of God. This actuality constitutes what is known as eternal life. Secondly, room must be found for the

1. MS. H, p.67.

2. Ibid: p.71.

3. Ibid: p.71.

4. Ibid: pp.71-73.

bility of a fall from this state, "a ceasing to be eternal transition into the temporal." These two points, it is ed, are safeguarded by the argument.¹

It was the possibility of a being "willing its lity in its self and not in God" that Coleridge had set o establish. "There must be," he says, "if the actual be a Will, a potentiality of willing the universal under the predominance of the particular, instead of willing the particular solely as the glory and presentation of the plenitude of the distinctions of the universal."² Again, the possibility must be an eternal possibility.³ In God all good inheres. To will a self that is not God is to will evil. And since in will alone causation inheres, to will evil is to originate evil.⁴ The possibility once established, the fact of its existence is the only proof of the actuality of evil.⁵ To deny its existence is to render religion purposeless, the conceptions of guilt and punishment meaningless, and to leave the distinction between pain and pleasure as the only criterion of value.⁶ But, on this basis, the fact of remorse implies evil in the causer or inflicter.⁷ God must then be either a demoniacal will or no will at all, that is "a mere fate," "a Deus Multitudo with

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1. MS.H, pp.89-93.
 2. Ibid: p.97.
 3. Ibid: p.99.
 4. Ibid: p.99.
 5. Ibid: p.101.
 6. Ibid: pp.101-103.
 7. MS.H, p.105.

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1. MS.H, pp.89-93.

2. Ibid: p.97.

3. Ibid: p.99.

4. Ibid: p.99.

5. Ibid: p.101.

6. Ibid: pp.101-103.

7. MS.H, p.105.

no higher unity than a heap of corn or a pillar of sand, the architecture of a whirlwind."¹ The patent fact is that evil exists. Further, from moral evil all evil derives. The conclusion of the matter is: "That moral Evil is—an Evil which is the sting of calamity, an Evil from which all else that is, or can be called Evil, derives its evilness, either as a necessary consequent of that evil or by its continued presence therein."²

One of the advantages which Coleridge claims for the principle on which he builds his argument is that he can predicate of will that it is higher and deeper than mere power. God is will, he has power. Power may be conceived of apart from intelligence and love. It is otherwise with will.

"The Supreme Will is an idea incapable of abstraction. We not only cannot think of it abstracted from Intelligence and Love as real—for this would apply equally to the idea of an unbounded power; but we cannot think of it at all, which cannot truly be said of the latter, i.e. of power as power."³

Will must be accepted as the ground, cause and condition of all possibility and reality. This necessity is due to its nature which includes both the possible and the real—"for necessity is the identity or co-inherence of the possible and the real."⁴

Coleridge refuses to accept the words cause, ground or principle in discussing the origin of evil. He speaks of it as original, originant, or originative.⁵ It began

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1. Ms.H, p.107.
 2. Ibid: p.107.
 3. Ibid: pp.109-111.
 4. Ibid: p.111.
 5. Ibid: pp.111-113.

and is not eternal. It must of necessity have had an antecedent. The possibility of this antecedent is the heart of his whole argument. Nor will he allow the terms begotten or proceeding, made or created in the relation between God and evil.¹ Only the conception of the bi-polar will gives the solution, a will in which the potential and the actual are the two poles of reality. Evil arose when the potential willed itself to be actual under impossible conditions, and a self became which was not God.

"The potential, still a form of reality, though its negative pole, and therefore a form of will, willed itself to be actual under impossible conditions, for to be actual was to will its subsistence to be in God and the power of willing otherwise existed potentially, by necessity part of a Will, and part because it was a particular Will. It could not but be, because the real was and the actual was, but in all particular forms the actual could not be without the particular. The result can be no otherwise expressed, as far as it can be at all expressed, than that a Self became which was not God, nor One with God. The potential was actualized yet not as actual, but by a strange yet appropriate contradiction, as potential."²

Coleridge concludes with a typical summary. The passage reveals his struggle to express in words the result of his daring flight with the polar logic.

"Such an origination of self must have been eternally possible; that it became, the fact itself has proved; and the glory, the wisdom, the omnipotence, and the infinite Love of God, unassailed, unapproached. We have learnt from reason that it is a legitimate idea that Evil may be, as experience proves that it is, that it was not nor cannot (sic) be eternal, and therefore had an origin; that it did not originate in God, or in the Will of God as God, or in the Absolute Will as absolute, nor even in

1. MS. H, p..139.

2. Ibid: p.141.

the particular eternal as eternal; but that Evil was and is, in the strictest sense of the words, self-originated, self-originant. The false Self and Evil differ but as essence and form, as cause and effect; differences that exist only for the abstracting and dividing understanding, but contemplated absolutely must be represented in a fearful sense, αὐτομήτης αὐτοῦτος .¹

It is by this argument that Coleridge feels that he has walked his isthmus. Identifying God and the Absolute, he faces squarely the problem at its deepest point. On the basis of a thoroughgoing monism, the problem of evil as solved by Coleridge, would appear to be so much verbal juggling. The monist's criticism would fall heavily on his play between potential and actual. On the other hand, Coleridge's criticism would fall with equal weight on the monist's failure to recognize in the fact of evil something more than "good in the making." This Coleridge could never accept. Evil is positive. Full credit must be given Coleridge for his courageous attempt. The problem may be ultimately insoluble, for as Lotze says, "No one has here found the thought which would save us from our difficulty."² But the value of Coleridge's particular attempt by means of his polar logic may be seen from Dr. Muirhead's judgment that, if God and the Absolute be identified, "it is by some such argument that the reality of moral evil must be vindicated."³

Coleridge's argument has the merit of avoiding the dualistic solution. Moreover, it avoids the weakness in

1. MS. H, pp.143-145.

2. Lotze: Microcosmus, English translation, Vol. II. p.716.
Quoted in Galloway: op.cit., p.512.

3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.243.

theories such as those of Leibnitz and Hegel, which find evil in the necessary imperfection of the finite and consequently discover evil to be a necessary constituent in experience.¹ In relating evil to the freedom of the will, Coleridge points the way again to religious reality.

On the other hand, his solution suffers from lack of contact with man's actual experience, the arena in which freedom is expressed. Again, there is a weakness in Coleridge's underlying assumption of a causal nexus between physical and moral evil. As has been seen, this assumption finds explicit expression in the course of his argument. The assumption may be true. It is another matter simply to assume it.

Muirhead raises the deeper question involved in Coleridge's basic principle of the eternal reality as pure will. Echoing Coleridge's words that the clue to reality is to be found in "the highest intuitions or ideas in our minds," he launches his criticism, from the standpoint of idealism, by asking whether the appeal to religious consciousness at its highest "does not suggest a level of experience at which will no longer survives as will, and sin is done away with in the peace of God."² Aside from the idealistic assumption which underlies this criticism, it is nevertheless suggestive. Would not the appeal to the highest intuitions of the religious consciousness suggest something other? Viewed from the standpoint of the

1. Vide Galloway: op.cit., pp.525, 528.

2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.244.

religious relation between God and man, sin is godlessness. It consists in a certain attitude to God. Would not the appeal to the religious consciousness, therefore, reveal sin to be a specifically religious conception?¹ Wrestling—we may even say, wrestling magnificently—with the problem as a purely metaphysical problem, has not Coleridge somehow or other missed the clue of his own religious experience and conscience?

Summing up Coleridge's discussion of sin and evil, it may be said that his treatment falls into two divisions, the one apologetic, the other metaphysical. The first is concerned with the question of original sin raised by the interpretation of the doctrine in contemporary orthodoxy; the second with the possibility of evil, the ultimate difficulty of the theistic philosopher. By the one he sought a purified Christian doctrine, by the other a more firmly-grounded theism.

1. Cf. McDowall: Is Sin our Fault? p.192 seq.
Mackintosh: The Christian Experience of Forgiveness, p.61.

CHAPTER VIII.

Christianity and Redemption.

1. Personal Experience.

If, as has been seen, Coleridge's views of the nature of sin were conditioned by his own experience, so also were his views of redemption. His sense of sin had its counterpart in his sense of the need of redemption, of forgiveness, of pardon.

"If," he writes in his Semina Rerum, "I were disposed to accept a pure and practical code of morals under the name of Religion, as Christianity, I should adopt the Discourses of Dr. Frederick Schleiermacher, as my Manual and Guide. But I want, I need, a Redeemer."¹

The written prayers of his later life reveal clearly the sense of this need of a God "that heareth prayer" and who forgives sin.² Muirhead attributes this to "the morbid bent" in his character.³ But the theory does not seem to meet the facts. In the first place, the haunting dread,

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1. MS.C, p.48. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.28. Writing of "assurance," he says, "To assert that I have the same assurance of mind that I am saved as that I need a Saviour, would be a contradiction to my own feelings, and yet I may have an equal, that is, an equivalent assurance. How is it possible that a sick man should have the same certainty of his convalescence as of his sickness? Yet he may be assured of it."
 2. MS.C, p.173. Vide Chapter VI. section V.
 3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.36.

occasioned by his opium habit, was by now a thing of the past. Although the moral scar of his opium-habit remained, his Highgate days, in comparison with the dark period of the opium-ridden years, were days of spiritual peace. His considerable intellectual output, together with the affection of and influence on his friends during these years, bears ample witness to this.¹ A letter to Stuart early in 1826 reveals this in another way. He informs Stuart that he finds himself thinking and reasoning on all religious subjects with a more cheerful sense of freedom, because he is secure of his faith in a personal God, a resurrection and a Redeemer, and further, and practically for the first time, "confident in the efficacy of prayer."²

Nor does Muirhead's view ring true with his reading. The fact that Southey's Life of Wesley was the favourite of his library,³ and along with Baxter, Luther, Jeremy Taylor, Leighton, the mystics and the Bible furnished much of his later reading,⁴ cannot be accounted for simply on the basis of morbidness. On July 13th, 1834, shortly before his death, Coleridge wrote his godson:-

"And I thus, on the brink of the grave, solemnly bear witness to you that the Almighty Redeemer, most gracious in His promises to them that truly seek Him, is faithful

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1. Vide Watson: Coleridge at Highgate, p.40
 2. Letters from the Lake Poets, p.294. - Letter of April 19, 1826. Cf. Campbell: op.cit., p.262.
 3. Coleridge wrote that it was "more often in my hands than any other work in my ragged book-regiment."
(Southey: Life of Wesley, I. xv. - Note of August 1825)
 4. Cf. Watson: op.cit., p.153.

to perform what He has promised; and has reserved, under all pains and infirmities, the peace that passeth all understanding, with the supporting assurance of a reconciled God, who will not withdraw His spirit from me in the conflict, and in His own time will deliver me from the evil one.....Eminently blessed are they who begin early to seek, fear, and love their God, trusting wholly in the righteousness and mediation of their Lord, Redeemer, Saviour and everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ."¹

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his faith. Like his view of sin, his doctrine of redemption is coloured throughout by his own experience.² But this is a far different matter from attributing it to morbidness.

Turning to his developed doctrine, we see that as sin is the ground, the condition, the occasion of Christianity, so redemption is the edifice of faith.³ It is the other moment of Christianity.⁴ It is Christianity itself. "Christianity and Redemption," he writes, "are equivalent terms."⁵ If the fact of sin be recognized by every religion, then "peculiar to the Christian religion are the remedy and.... the solution."⁶ It is to be expected that Coleridge, with his strong emphasis on the volitional aspect of sin, would stress the corresponding element in his doctrine of redemption. This is, in fact, found to be the case. Sin is the corruption of the will, resulting from an act of self-subjection to the determination of nature and the rejection thereby of its own

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1. Letters, II. p.776.
 2. Vide Chapter II. section III.
 3. Aids, p.206.
 4. Ibid: p.206. (Vide supra)
 5. Ibid: p.207.
 6. Ibid: p.193.

law. Correspondingly, redemption is the reinstatement in the place of sovereignty of the will's own law, the law of perfect freedom, "the resumption of the Law into the Will."¹

"Whenever," writes Coleridge, "by self-subjection to this universal light, the will of the individual, the particular will, has become a will of reason, the man is regenerate: and reason is then the spirit of the regenerated man, whereby the person is capable of a quickening inter-communion with the Divine Spirit."²

This constitutes what may be called the content of redemption. The mystery of redemption consists in the fact "that this had been rendered possible for us." "And so," he quotes in conclusion, "the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening Spirit."³

II. Idealist or Christian?

This last quotation leads us at once to the consideration of the nature of the redemptive act. Is it, like sin, a self-willed act; in this case, of restoration? Is the last Adam, like the first, merely the representative of all men? In short, what place does Coleridge assign to the historic person of Christ in the redemptive act? Such a question is of some importance in view of his later remarks on the Christian doctrine of Atonement.

The materials on which to base a judgment regarding the question are admittedly scanty. The Aids do not attempt to discuss the question directly and, unfortunately, there is no treatment of redemption comparable to that of evil

1. Aids, p.202.

2. Ibid: p.143.

3. Ibid: p.143. I.Cor., XV. 45.

in the manuscript remains, reflecting his developed thought. We are therefore forced back on indirect evidence, and on previous judgment of the general trend of his thought.

On the one hand, there is the view that Coleridge is purely idealistic in his interpretation of Christianity. Potter contends that Coleridge's conception of religion as "a self-changing act" was far removed from the religious themes of his time.¹ This view has behind it also the weighty authority of Dr. Muirhead. As his presentation is typical and the best from this standpoint, it is necessary to examine it at length. Coleridge, in his judgment, stops short of speaking of the representative Christ only because of the method of the Aids. "But," says Dr. Muirhead, "that this is his real meaning we cannot doubt from what we hear elsewhere both from himself and others of his view of what is essential in the teaching of Christianity."² In support of this view, Dr. Muirhead adduces two types of evidence, the one suggestive, the other confirmatory.

Without calling in question at the moment Muirhead's general contention, it is of interest to examine the passages adduced in support of his view. Muirhead's words may first be noted,

"From what he had already said of the first Adam as the representative of all men, we might have expected him to go on to say the same of the last Adam as the head of a race renewed in the spirit of their minds, all the more as he takes this to be the meaning

1. Potter: Coleridge and S.T.C. p.230.
 2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.245.

of St. Paul's use of 'the Word, on which he founds his whole reasoning.'"1

Muirhead's method of free quotation has obscured the fact that Coleridge is speaking of St. Paul's use of the word law and not of the Word. The passage is as follows,

"In the original purity of a rational agent the uncorrupted will is identical with the law. Nay, in as much as a Will perfectly identical with the Law is one with the divine Will, we may say, that in the unfallen rational agent the Will constitutes the Law. But it is evident that the holy and spiritual power and light, which by a prolepsis or anticipation we have named law, is a grace, an inward perfection, and without the commanding, binding and menacing character which belongs to a law, acting as a master or sovereign distinct from, and existing, as it were, externally for, the agent who is bound to obey it. Now this is St. Paul's sense of the word; and on this he grounds his whole reasoning."2

This passage, it may be remarked, is inconclusive regarding the point at issue.

Further, Dr. Muirhead quotes Coleridge's summary of St. John's doctrine of redemption. Redemption is identified "in kind with a fact of hourly occurrence—expressing it, I say, by a familiar fact, the same in kind with that intended, though of a far lower dignity."3 Coleridge in the particular section is contending against slavery to Pauline metaphors. The passage as it stands emphasizes the nature of redemption as a life. It does not point necessarily to the view of Christ as a mere representative man.

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.245.

2. Aids, pp.201-202.

3. Ibid: p.217. Quoted freely by Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.245.

In further support of this view, there is the evidence of Allsop who reports Coleridge as holding that miracles are supererogatory, and that "the law of God and the great principles of the Christian religion would have been the same had Christ never assumed humanity."¹ This reported speech of Coleridge is in keeping with what we have from his own pen in his Unitarian days. "Although the Man Jesus had never appeared in the world, yet I am Quaker enough to believe, that in the heart of every man the Christ would have revealed himself, the Power of the Word."² And we have Allsop's word for it that "Coleridge ever retained the convictions of his early, earnest youth."³

Finally, there is the evidence drawn from Green in support of this view. Green draws a parallel between Adam, "as the name intended to signify primaeval man collectively," and Christ, as "the Almighty Power of Goodness," his spirit, "the eternal Humanity working in us."

The redemptive process is only another name for "all the works of creation," and therefore independent of all

1. Allsop: Letters, Conversations and Recollections, p.47. The conversation is undated, but occurs sometime later than 1818, the date of Coleridge's introduction to Allsop. (Campbell: op.cit., p.236.)

2. Letters, I. p.286. - Letter of April 8, 1799, not cited by Muirhead.

In addition there is the notebook entry of 1804: "This is the true Atonement—that is, to reconcile the struggles of the infinitely various finite with the permanent." (Anima Poetae, p.81.)

3. Allsop: op.cit., preface.

profession of Christianity.¹ Muirhead remarks that Green "is not likely to have misrepresented him (Coleridge) in anything so fundamental."²

On the other hand, it must be noted that Allsop had his own particular view of Christianity;³ and it is legitimate to infer that he would seek in Coleridge authority for his own views, and that his bias would furnish him with a filter to eliminate any other views of Coleridge. A similar reservation is necessary in the case of Green. Green was a disciple, not a mirror. Not to raise this point seems equivalent to begging the whole question. Finally, allowance must be made for the personal equation in the case of Muirhead himself, who is admittedly pure idealist in his interpretation of Christianity.

A quotation from Coleridge, "Christianity is a growth, a Becoming, a Progression...History, therefore, and History under its highest form of Moral freedom, is that alone in which the Idea of Christianity can be realized,"⁴ leaves the question of the historical origins of Christianity still unanswered and the point at issue unsettled. But the expanding footnote reflects the tenor of Muirhead's mind. The

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1. Green: Spiritual Philosophy, Vol. II. p.386 seq.
N.B. Connecting on Jeremy Taylor's words that "nature alone cannot bring them to heaven," Coleridge says, "This is likewise my belief, and that man must have a Christ, even if Adam had continued in Paradise." (Notes on English Divines, I. p.267.)
2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.246.
3. Allsop: op.cit., preface.
4. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.247.
Quoted freely from MS.C, p.43.

quotation is from the Confessions, Letter VI. where Coleridge emphasizes the priority of the Christian faith to the written Scriptures. Coleridge urges,

"Draw their minds to the fact of the progressive and still continuing fulfillment of the assurance of a few fishermen, that both their own religion, though of divine origin, and the religion of their conquerors, which included or recognized all other religions of the known world, should be superceded by the faith in a man recently and ignominiously executed."¹

Muirhead, citing the passage, changes the whole meaning by quoting the words "faith in a man recently and ignominiously executed" as "the faith of a man recently and ignominiously executed."² The change in preposition at this crucial point is significant.

Further, remarking on Coleridge's interpretation of Christianity as equally removed from both materialism and Evangelicalism, Muirhead concludes with the sentence,

"To him Christianity thus interpreted was the highest achievement of religion, itself the blossom and flower of the spirit—a position from which there is no going back for anyone who claims a future for it in the atmosphere of modern thought."³

This last sentence reveals the situation in its true light. Muirhead has seized on those features of Coleridge's thought which he believes to be in agreement with his own idealistic view of Christianity. Religion, it will be remembered, is to Coleridge philosophy plus history; and Christianity, Judaism plus Greece. Muirhead's interpretation stresses the "Grecian"

1. Confessions, p.329.

2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.247n. (italics mine)

3. Ibid: p.246.

aspect to the neglect of the former. In doing so, it neglects half the facts.

In the first place there are the explicit statements of Coleridge himself. Article V. of the 1816 Confession of Faith reads:-

"I receive with full and grateful faith the assurance of revelation, that the Word, which is from all eternity with God, and is God, assumed our human nature in order to redeem me, and all mankind from this our connate corruption. My reason convinces me, that no other mode of redemption is conceivable, and, as did Socrates, would have yearned after the Redeemer, though it would not dare expect so wonderful an act of divine love, except only as an effort of my mind to conceive the utmost of the infinite greatness of that love."

Article VI. carries this position further:-

"I believe, that this assumption of humanity by the Son of God, was revealed and realized to us by the Word made flesh, and manifested to us in Christ Jesus; and that his miraculous birth, his agony, his crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension, were all both symbols of our redemption (*παράκλησις τῶν νοσηρῶν*) and necessary parts of the awful process."¹

This position is repeated sixteen years later in his 1832 Confession. The second article or moment reads, "that the Creator is God, and a God who seeketh that which was lost, raiseth up that which had fallen—and this by the only-begotten Word incarnate, God and Man."² Again, in the note already mentioned in which Coleridge criticizes Schleiermacher's Reden, he proceeds to state the grounds of the possibility of a redeemer. "This is possible only under the two-fold condition, which I find asserted in the New Testament and in the Creeds of the Universal

1. Omniana, p.431.
2. MS.C, p.150.

Church—that he is my fellow-man, yet not my fellow-creature.”¹

This is repeated substantially in a note on Jeremy Taylor, where he denounces

“the heresy of those who divided and severed the divinity from the humanity; so that not the incarnate God, very God of very God, would have atoned for us on the cross, but the incarnating man; a heresy which either denies or reduces to an absurdity the whole doctrine of redemption, that is, Christianity itself, which rests on the two articles of faith; first, the necessity, and secondly, the reality of a Redeemer—both articles alike incompatible with redemption by a mere man.”²

It is difficult to see how such plain statements can be set aside.

In the second place, all of Coleridge's constantly repeated strictures against the Unitarian or Socinian theology, together with his statements on the Christian doctrine of Atonement,³ lose their whole point on the basis of such a view as that of Dr. Muirhead.

“Socinianism,” he holds, “is not a religion, but a theory, and that, too, a very pernicious, or a very unsatisfactory, theory. Pernicious,—for it excludes all our deep and awful ideas of the perfect holiness of God, his justice and his mercy, and thereby makes the voice of conscience a delusion, as having no correspondent in the character of the legislator; regarding God as merely a good-natured pleasure-giver, so happiness be produced, indifferent as to the means:—Unsatisfactory, for it promises forgiveness without any solution of the difficulty of the compatibility of this with the justice of God; in no way explains the fallen condition of man, nor offers any means for his regeneration.”⁴

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1. MS.C, p.48. - Note of 1826.
 2. Notes on English Divines, I. p.198.
 3. Aids, pp.214-225.
 4. Omniana, p.420.

A typical utterance is the following, taken from the note on Schleiermacher, already quoted, "Christ's humanity seems divine in subordination to his Divinity;—but is shorn of half its' rays, when substituted for it."¹ Elsewhere he writes,

"The true life of Christians is to eye Christ in every step of his life—not only as their Rule but as their Strength: looking to him as their Pattern both in doing and in suffering, and drawing power from him for going through both: being without him able for nothing."²

In the Aids, Coleridge answers his own rhetorical question as to the causal agent in the redemptive process, by replying,

"The Agent and Personal Cause of the Redemption of Mankind is—the co-eternal Word and only-begotten Son of the living God, incarnate, tempted, agonizing (agonistes ἀγωνισόμενος) crucified, submitting to death, resurgent, communicative of his Spirit, ascendent, and obtaining for his Church the Descent, and Communion of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter."³

In a note in Steffens' Ueber die Idee der Universitäten, Coleridge asks what Steffens means by the word, Christ, and proceeds in criticism to state that he would have taken a different way of expressing his own faith.

"I would have followed St. John's example, and have called the Ens supremum or the absolutely Real, the co-eternal Offspring of the Absolute Cause of Reality, the Word relatively to the Eternal Mind; the Reason, the living self-subsistent Reason relatively to the Absolute Will and as its' only adequate Exponent—and then have shewn its incorporation in the visible World—and lastly, its' incarnation or personal Humanization in the Son of Man, the Christ."⁴

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1. MS.C, p.49. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.211,250,254; II. pp.210, 302-303.
 2. Aids, p.203.
 3. Ibid: p.223.
 4. British Museum Copy. - Note at end of volume.

And again, there is the letter to his godchild already quoted in which Coleridge lays emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Saviour.¹

Thirdly, there is, in addition to his own statements, the testimony of Gillman, with whom he lived for the last eighteen years of his life, that Coleridge's favourite New Testament writers were St. John and St. Paul, and that "he died in the faith of these apostles."² To this there may be added the judgment of Dr. Watson, the editor of Coleridge's Theory of Life, that he was undoubtedly "a pious Christian,"³ and of Shedd, his American editor, that Coleridge "in the end embraced the Christian system"⁴ and that, after all his investigation, "saw his way clear into the region of Christian Revelation and rested there."⁵ Hort, writing a few years later of Coleridge's fondness for Luther, gave his judgment, "On the whole, this fervent sympathy with Luther is perhaps the truest extant token of the man Coleridge antecedent to the poet or the philosopher."⁶

Coming to more recent critics, there is to be noted that Dr. Wardrop in his study of this question⁷ accepts the words of Coleridge as they stand and does not recognize

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1. Letters, II. pp.775-776.
 2. Gillman: op.cit., p.317.
 3. Theory of Life, Preface Miscellanies, etc. p.358.
Cf. Ibid: p.253.
 4. Shedd: Introductory Essay, Vol. I. p.12.
 5. Ibid: p.15.
 6. Hort: Cambridge Essays, p.345.
 7. Wardrop: The Doctrine of Atonement in Coleridge and Maurice.
Ph.D. Thesis. Edinburgh University, 1932.

the view expressed best by Muirhead. Again, Dr. Wellek's censure of Coleridge as one who became in the end "a defender of orthodoxy" may be noted.¹ To Wellek, Coleridge's "acquiescence in all the doctrine of the Anglican Church"² is pernicious, but his recognition of this aspect of Coleridge is testimony to the fact that Coleridge's Christian faith cannot be dismissed as negligible. Muirhead himself recognizes the fact also, but dismisses the matter by attributing it "to the exaggerated sense of his own mission as a renovator of the Christian religion, blown into a flame by the adulation of some of the more fanatical of his friends."³ Potter, following the lead of Muirhead, recognizes also this Christian element in Coleridge's thought, but refuses to take it seriously. He writes of him as one who "tried to keep on the windy side of orthodoxy," and suggests that in "his apparent swing to orthodoxy there is something of an increasing physiological love of tradition."⁴ In accordance with his analysis of Coleridge, Potter attributes this "panic adoption of Christianity" to Coleridge's alter ego, "the all-too-human Coleridge," and holds that it "is true of Coleridge down to a not very deep level."⁵ Over against this typical modern analysis by Potter the sane balance of Hort's criticism is to be commended. Hort spoke the truth when he wrote that, with

1. Wellek: op.cit., p.135.

2. Ibid: p.129.

3. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.248.

4. Potter: Coleridge and S.T.C., pp.217-236

5. Ibid: p.235.

the exception of two or three aberrations, "the Creeds have rarely had a believer at once so hearty and so intelligent."¹

Summing up, it is clear that there is an authentic Christian element in Coleridge's thought, and that this element is seen clearly in his doctrine of redemption. "Not alone," he writes, "the knowledge of the boon, but the precious inestimable Boon itself, is the Grace and Truth that came by Jesus Christ! I believe Moses, I believe Paul; but I believe in Christ."² Allowing for the characteristic hyperbole of the statement, it reflects an element in his thought which cannot be dismissed as merely verbal.³ The fact is, the two strains, idealistic and Christian, are interwoven in his thought. He himself sought an integration, but the integration was not to be at the expense of either of the two.

III. The Christian Doctrine of Atonement.

It is a mistake to assume that Coleridge's reaction to the Evangelicalism of his day indicates a complete break with the Christian tradition.⁴ Rather, it was in the interests of a purified Christian faith that his life was

1. Hort: op.cit., p.344.

2. Aids, p.241.

3. Cf. Miscellanies, p.309. Commenting on Thomas Browne's statement that there is no salvation to those who believe not in Christ, Coleridge remarks:- "This is plainly confined to such as have had Christ preached to them;—but the doctrine, that salvation is in and by Christ only, is a most essential verity, and an article of unspeakable grandeur and consolation."

Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp. 29, 73, 218.

4. Notes on English Divines, II. p.274.

spent. This is clearly seen in the passage in the Aids, where Coleridge deals with redemption.¹ The error of contemporary orthodoxy, with its literalist interpretation of the Scriptures, was that it confused picture with fact. Coleridge does not call in question the Christian doctrines regarding the forgiveness of sin, and abolition of guilt, through the redemptive power of Christ's love.² What he does criticize is the confusion between St. Paul's metaphorical descriptions of the effects of redemption and the redemptive act itself. In particular, his strong sense of ethical reality protested against the current commercial and penal theories of the Atonement.³

Coleridge lays down the principle that redemption may be considered in a two-fold relation; first, in relation to the causal antecedent, the Redeemer's act, and secondly, in relation to the consequent effects in and for the redeemed. The causative act is transcendent and ultimately a mystery. At one point Coleridge states, "Factum est: and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the Fact, it can be characterized only by the consequences."⁴

1. Aids, pp.214-225.

2. Ibid: p.214.

3. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.41-43. The original notes on which the whole argument in the Aids is based are dated May 4th, 1819. The date is significant in view of what has been noted above regarding his reputed "Physiological love of tradition" and his "panic adoption of Christianity."

4. Aids, p.215.

The consequences from the effect of "being born anew: as before in the flesh to the world, so now born in the spirit to Christ,"¹ are sanctification from sin and liberation from the inherent penalties consequent to sin in the world to come. These consequences, Coleridge contends, are described by St. Paul in Jewish metaphors, and by St. John in analogies.

Coleridge argues that it is reasonable to expect that St. Paul's thought would be coloured by his own past and that he naturally would adopt the thought forms of his own period. Coleridge lists "the four principal metaphors" used by St. Paul as illustrations of the consequences of Christ's redemption of mankind:-²

1. Sin-offerings, sacrificial expiation.
2. Reconciliation, atonement,
3. Ransom from slavery, redemption, the buying back again, or being bought back.
4. Satisfaction of a creditor's claims by a payment of the debt.

Coleridge argues that under one or other of these all of St. Paul's writings on the mediation of Christ may be referred, and, further, that "the very number and variety of the words or periphrases used by him to express one and the same thing furnish the strongest presumptive proof that all alike were used metaphorically."³ It is not necessary to pause over Coleridge's statement that St. Paul is concerned with bringing home to the minds of his readers and hearers only the consequences of the act of redemption. It is, in fact,

1. Aids, p.223.

2. Ibid: p.215, Cf. ibid: pp.219-223.

3. Ibid: p.216.

Coleridge's sole concern.

On the other hand, St. John, according to Coleridge, "enunciates the fact itself, to the full extent in which it is enunciable for the human mind, simply and without any metaphor."¹ St. John makes use of the analogy of birth. "In the Redeemed it is a re-generation, a birth, a spiritual seed impregnated and evolved, the germinal principle of a higher and enduring life, of a spiritual life."² This constitutes "the differential of immortality," since "regeneration to spiritual life is at the same time a redemption from the spiritual death."³

Here, then, was the first mistake of the theologians of the day. They confused metaphor with fact and then applied the metaphorical ideas to the redeeming act itself, its motive and its necessity. In doing so they failed to grasp the true significance of the Pauline metaphors, Regarded as metaphorical descriptions of the effects or "consequents" of the redemptive act, as realized in the experience of the redeemed man, they are all true. The "consequents" are.

1. Aids, p.217.

2. Ibid: p.217.

3. Ibid: p.217. Cf. Southey: Life of Wesley, II. p.361. Note. "I profess myself unable to conceive how the truth of the Gospel can be brought home to, or laid hold of, by a sinner, without something more than a vague XYZ—without some realising apprehension of that from which we are to be rescued. This seems indispensable to the intelligibility of Christianity. Without it, the Gospel is the fragment of a sentence."

"the same for the Sinner relatively to God and his own Soul, as the satisfaction of a debt for a debtor relatively to his creditor; as the sacrificial atonement made by the priest for the transgressor of the Mosaic Law; as the reconciliation to an alienated parent for a son who had estranged himself from his father's house and presence; and as a redemptive ransom for a slave or captive."¹

In the second place, the "Bargain and Purchase Theologians," as he calls them,² failed to distinguish between persons and things. Coleridge repudiates the idea of Christ's sufferings and death being a "satisfaction" or payment of debt to God in the absolute sense of contemporary orthodoxy.³ Even granting for the sake of argument the validity of a theory involving debt, satisfaction, payment in full, and the like, in short, a theory based on a notion of justice, Coleridge asks, "Is this justice a moral attribute?"⁴

"If you attach any meaning to the term justice, as applied to God," Coleridge writes, "it must be the same to which you refer when you affirm or deny it of any other personal agent—save only, that in its attribution to God, you speak of it as unmixed and perfect."⁵

Coleridge illustrates this principle by two imaginary stories. In the first a sum of money is owing from one man to another. The debtor is insolvent and is saved from ruin by the payment of the debt by a friend. Complete commercial satisfaction is thus made, because "this is altogether a question of things."⁶

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1. Aids, p.224.
 2. MS.C, p.7.
 3. Aids, pp.219-220.
 4. Ibid: p.220.
 5. Ibid: p.220.
 6. Ibid: 221.

In the second story, the debt is not one of money, but of gratitude and love owing from a prodigal son to a worthy mother. A friend steps in and performs, as a "vicarious son," the duties of sonship. Coleridge asks whether this will satisfy the mother's claims on her son or entitle him to her esteem, approbation, and blessing. The form of the question indicates the negative answer. But, adds Coleridge, if by the force of the example of the vicarious son, or persuasion, the prodigal should be led to repentance, then the mother would be wholly satisfied. But this is only because it is no longer a question of things. The passage is of some importance historically, foreshadowing as it does the developed moral influence theory of Horace Bushnell. It may be given, therefore, in full, as published in 1825. The notes on which it is based date from 1819.¹

"If indeed by the force of Matthew's example, by persuasion or by additional and more mysterious influences, or by an inward co-agency, compatible with the existence of a personal will, James should be led to repent; if through admiration and love of this great goodness gradually assimilating his mind to the mind of his benefactor, he should in his own person become a grateful and dutiful child— then doubtless the mother would be wholly satisfied!"²

Although Coleridge does not enlarge this analogy in relation to Christ's mediation, he is certain that in the case of redemption "the beneficial act is the first, the indispensable condition." Then follows the "co-efficient,"³ or

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1. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.41-43.
 2. Aids, p.222.
 3. Ibid: pp.222-223.

reaction on the part of the sinner. Although liberation must be attributed to the act and free grace of another, yet "reaction or co-agency" is necessary on the part of the redeemed.

Hence, it is not impossible for the spiritually disciplined mind to realize that the redemptive act, though ultimately a "mystery," supposes "an agent who can at once act on the Will as an exciting cause, quasi ab extra; and in the Will, as the condition of its potential, and the ground of its actual, being." Only on such a supposition is redemption even negatively conceivable.¹ In a note written in a copy of Kant's Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft Coleridge attempts to show how divine influence on the will of man is rationally conceivable. Accepting the Kantian assumption of the difference between the apparent and the real man, Coleridge declines to follow Kant in his denial of the action of outer influences on the will.

While admitting that "regeneration through an act and energy of the diseased Arbitrement aided and fostered by a supernatural Will, or divine agency" is ultimately a

1. Aids, p.225.

N.B. In 1808, Coleridge wrote to Estlin:- "The Calvinistic Tenet of a vicarious Satisfaction I reject not without some Horror, and though I believe that the Redemption by Christ implies more than what the Unitarians understand by the phrase, yet I use it rather as an XYZ, an unknown Quantity, than as words to which I pretend to annex clear notions. I believe, that in the salvation of man, a spiritual process sui generis is required, a spiritual aid and agency, the nature of which I am wholly ignorant of, as a cause, and only imperfectly apprehend it from its necessity and its effects. (Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society, Vol.XV. pp.105-106. Letter of December 3, 1808.)

mystery, yet he finds analogies to it

"in the undoubted influence of example, of education, in short of all the administrators and auxiliaries of the Will. The will then may be acted on, not only by ourselves, in the cultivation of auxiliary Habits, but by the will of others—nay, even by nature, by the Breeze, the Sunshine, by the tender life & freshness of the sensation of convalescence, by shocks of Sickness."¹

"Why then," Coleridge continues tentatively, after referring to George Herbert's poem, The Sonnet,

"not an influence of influences from the Sun of God, with the Spirit of God acting directly on the Homo ^{Noumenon}, as well as thro' the Homo Phaenomenon? This would make a just distinction between Grace and Redemption and Providential Aids: the direct action on the noumenon would be the grace—the call—the influence on the noumenon through the homo phaenomenon by the pre-arrangement of outward or bodily circumstances would be, as they are commonly called in pious language, providences."

Whether Coleridge himself would have been satisfied with these speculations is doubtful. Certainly, in the Biographia, he declares against such a distinction between the apparent and the real man, on the assumption of which the speculative note is based.² What is certain is that the redemptive power must act as an influence in the will.

"No power," he writes in 1820, "can be redemptive which does not at the same time act in the ground of the life as one with the ground, that is, must act in my will and not merely on my will; and yet extrinsically, as an outward power, that is, as that which outward Nature is to the organisation, viz. the causa correspondens et conditio perpetua ab extra."³

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1. Note in Kant: op.cit., p.297. British Museum Copy. Printed Nidecker: Revue de littérature comparée, VII. pp.144-146. Quoted in Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.249-250. - (slightly different here.)
 2. Biographia Literaria, p.127.
 3. Letters, II. p.710.

Coleridge therefore continues,

"The Redeemer cannot be merely God, unless we adopt Pantheism, that is, deny the existence of a God; and yet God he must be, for whatever is less than God, may act on, but cannot act in, the will of another. Christ must become man, but he cannot become us, except as far as we become him, and this we cannot do but by assimilation; and assimilation is a vital real act, not a notional or merely intellectual one....For it is evident, that the assimilation in question is to be carried on by faith."¹

Coleridge here is insistent on two things: first, the necessity of God's action in redemption; and second, the necessity of man's response or "co-agency" in the redemptive process. It was at this latter point that he joined issue with a Calvinism that regarded the soul as merely passive. That the soul must be active, active even in such an event or process as redemption, was basic to his whole thought.

In his insistence on the distinction between the Pauline metaphors and the redemptive act itself,² and in his rejection of commercial and judicial theories in favour of a more personal conception of the work of salvation, Coleridge struck two notes of undoubted value.³ From the point of view of history they are of tremendous importance as giving the first impulse to the movement towards the adoption of more ethical conceptions, the movement manifested in the work of

1. Letters, II. p.710.

2. Cf. Notes. Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, pp.103-104
Cf. Notes on English Divines, II. p.227.

3. Vide Franks: A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ,
 II. p.379.
Vide Tulloch: op.cit., pp.22-23.

Maurice, Erskine, Bushnell and MacLeod Campbell.¹

On the other hand, it is legitimate to ask by what criterion Coleridge is able to distinguish between what is metaphor and what is analogy, to use his own distinction. The distinction, in itself, is understandable. But on what basis is Coleridge able to assert, for instance, that reconciliation is a metaphor, while birth is an analogy? And, aside from the question of exegesis,² how does it chance that St. Paul uses only metaphors and St. John only analogies? Here the weakness of Coleridge's particular theory of language becomes only too patent.

Again, as Shedd pointed out, it may be asked whether Coleridge's apparent lack of interest in the transcendent or divine aspect of the redemptive act does not indicate a failure to grasp the full significance of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement.³ It is necessary in the first place to make due allowance for the apologetic interest which, dominant in the Aids, precludes a full treatment of the doctrine. Coleridge states explicitly that his one object is that of "clearing this awful mystery from those too current misrepresentations of its nature and import that have laid it open to scruples and objections."⁴ Further, one may express, as

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1. Vide Sabatier: The Doctrine of the Atonement and its Historical Evolution, pp.97-98.
 2. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II. pp.302-303.
 3. Shedd: Introductory Essay, Vol. I. pp.53-55.
 4. Aids, p.207.

does Tulloch,¹ a judgment in favour of Coleridge's principle of Christian agnosticism. As against the claim to explicit and detailed knowledge of the workings of the Divine Mind, which characterized the orthodoxy of his day, there is much to be said for Coleridge's reticence.

Bushnell, his American disciple, held that Coleridge took a wholly subjective view of the nature and value of Christ's work, that its effect is wholly on man and has no effect on God.² Although differing from Bushnell in certain respects, Wardrop, in recent years, takes a similar view. He maintains that the whole bearing of Coleridge's teaching is in line with the principle underlying the Patristic Ransom Theory,³ namely deliverance from evil as opposed to satisfaction to God.⁴ Certainly Coleridge repudiates the idea of Christ's death being a satisfaction or payment of debt to God in a literal sense and lays emphasis on redemption as deliverance from the bondage of evil. Wardrop does good service in drawing attention to this aspect of Coleridge's thought. It is going beyond the evidence, however, to assert that Coleridge's answer to the Cur Deus Homo? of Anselm "is the evil and the evil alone—not God at all."⁵ As Fisher

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1. Tulloch: op.cit., p.23. Cf. Grensted: A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement, pp.266-267, where he notes Bishop Butler as the chief exponent of "intellectual humility." "Butler is content to assert the objective efficacy of Christ's death as against Deistic rationalists, without inquiry into its method."
 2. Bushnell: Christ in Theology, p.233.
 3. Wardrop: op.cit., p.99.
 4. Vide Aulen: Christus Victor.
 5. Wardrop: op.cit., pp.33-34.

remarks, "It is a mistake to attribute to Coleridge the opinion that the atoning work of Christ consists in its power to affect the minds of men."¹ Coleridge's one interest in the Aids is the consequences for man of the redemptive love of God.

There can be no question as to his own faith. In an ex officio note, where the man stands clearly revealed, he writes,

"Without Christ, or in any other power but that of Christ, and (subjectively) of faith in Christ, no man can be saved.....If he verily embrace Christ as his Redeemer, and unfeignedly feel in himself the necessities of Redemption, he implicitly holds the Divinity of Christ."²

Elsewhere, Coleridge argues with insight that the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity derives from the experience of redemption,³ and in the Aids asserts explicitly, "On the doctrine of Redemption depends the Faith, the Duty, of believing in the Divinity of our Lord."⁴

It is not surprising, therefore, to find certain passages which indicate that Coleridge was at times prepared to go beyond Factum Est. In the Appendix to the Statesman's Manual he writes:- "From God's love through His Son, crucified for us from the beginning of the world, religion begins: and in love towards God and the creatures of God it hath its end

1. Fisher: History of Doctrine, p.449.
2. Notes on English Divines, II. pp.149-150.
3. Omniana, p.432, Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.68.
4. Aids, p.120.

and completion."¹ And in a letter to the Reverend Edward Coleridge, written probably in 1825, he says, "The World was made for the Gospel—or that Christianity is the final Cause of the World. If so, the Idea of the Redemption of the World must needs form the best central Reservoir for all our knowledges physical or personal."² In a note on a Sermon of Donne, Coleridge writes of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ as the

"visible words of the invisible Word that was in the beginning, symbols in time and historic fact of the redemptive functions, passions, and procedures of the Lamb crucified from the foundation of the world;—the incarnation, cross, and passion,—in short, the whole life of Christ in the flesh....being essential and substantive parts of the process, the total of which they represented."³

Such passages, taken together with those already quoted concerning the God" who seeketh that which was lost,"⁴ indicate that, to Coleridge, in the last analysis, the nature of God is redemptive. From a review of the whole matter the impression grows that, for Coleridge, the Incarnation in all its fulness is the Atonement. A note in the Aids is striking in its tone:—

"God manifested in the flesh is Eternity in the form of Time. But Eternity in relation to Time is the absolute to the conditional, or the real to the apparent, and Redemption must partake of both;—always perfected, for it is a Fiat of the Eternal;—

1. Appendix to Statesman's Manual: Biog. Lit. p.355. — — — —
2. Unpublished Letters, II. p.358.
Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.87.
3. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.79-80. Cf. Ibid: II. p.120.
4. MS. C, p.165. Vide Chapter VI. Section V.

continuous, for it is a process in relation to man; the former, the alone objectively, and therefore universally, true."¹

Such a note reveals clearly the double strain in Coleridge's thought and his attempt to seek an integration. It reveals also how the one checked and influenced the other. In redemption, God acts through the Word. Here is his Platonism. In redemption, God has acted through the Word Incarnate. Here is his Christian faith.

1. Aids, p.209n.

Cf. Notes Theol., Pol. and Misc., p.145. "the most important division.....is, whether the essence of Christianity be to make us better men only, or to make us other men,—'create in us a new heart.'"

CHAPTER IX.

The Immortality of the Soul.

I. Early Discussion.

Shortly after the death of Coleridge in July 1834, his friend, Charles Lamb, wrote of him, "He had a hunger for Eternity."¹ No better description of Coleridge during the latter part of his life could be given. As far as can be determined, Coleridge never, at any time in his life, doubted the immortality of the soul. It was not a belief to which he came by any avenue of proof. It was at every point an essential part of his religion. Eternity was set in his heart. But, as with each article of his belief, he strove constantly to give it more adequate expression.

As a youth, he sang of happiness continuing

"Till Death shall close thy tranquil eye
While Faith proclaims 'Thou shalt not die!'"²

In 1794, on the death of a friend, he asked:

"Is this piled earth our Being's passless mound?
Tell me, cold grave! is Death with poppies crown'd?"³

1. Monthly Magazine, February 8, 1845. Printed in Watson:
Coleridge at Highgate, p.164.

2. Poems, p.33. (1791)

3. Poems, p.77

And in 1796, Coleridge answered his own question.

"To my more natural Reason,.....(The death of a young person).....appears like a transition; there seems an incompleteness in the life of such a person, contrary to the general order of nature; and it makes the heart say, 'this is not all.'"¹

This argument from "incompleteness," to which both head and heart gave assent in 1796, was one to which Coleridge constantly returned. It appears in the Aids of 1825. The appearance of the argument in writings separated so widely indicates its importance in Coleridge's mind.²

Again, if the soul be immortal, life in some sense or other is essential. As early as 1796 he rejected the idea of annihilation.³ The death of his son, Berkeley, in 1799, served to confirm this. Life does not cease. "I will not believe that it ceases—in this moving, stirring, and harmonious universe—I cannot believe it!"⁴

Priestley's argument from the words and miracles of Jesus affords Coleridge no satisfaction. His argument is otherwise, as the lines of 1801 indicate:

"God is with me, God is in me!
I cannot die, if Life be Love."⁵

1. Unpublished Letters, I. p.64.

2. Cf. a note of 1806-1807, Anima Poetae, p.184. - "Our mortal existence," he notes, "what is it but a stoppage in the blood of life, a brief eddy from wind or course of currents in the ever-flowing ocean of pure Activity."

3. Letters, I. p.211.

4. Ibid: I. p.285.

5. Poems, p.360.

This argument, from the nature of personal relations, a nature that differentiates man from the beasts, is another basic principle in Coleridge's doctrine of immortality.¹ It is expanded in 1808, when the appeal is made to conscience as the differentia of man. Conscience, in this case, is known in personal relations. Quoting the lines written in 1801, he comments:-

"And now, that I am alone and utterly hopeless for myself, yet still I love—and more strongly than ever feel that conscience or the duty of love is the proof of continuing, as it is the cause and condition of existing consciousness.....And for what reason, say, rather for what cause, do you believe in immortality? Because I ought, therefore I must!"²

This appeal to conscience appears again in 1806 in the important letter to Clarkson. The growth of consciousness is the end of our earthly being. Conscience has no meaning if existence ceases suddenly at a point. The very idea of consciousness implies "a recollection after the Sleep of Death of all material circumstances that were at least immediately previous to it."³ It appears once more in 1811, where it is related to Coleridge's refutation of the materialist's argument that, because the soul is influenced by the body, therefore the break-up of the body means the death of the soul. "The influence of the body on the soul," Coleridge states, "will not prove the common destiny of both." Man is not the slave of nature, but uses nature for his own ends.⁴ In an

1. Cf. Letters, I. pp.364-365.
 2. Anima Poetae, pp.201-203.
 3. Unpublished Letters, I. pp.358-359.
 4. Omniana, pp.418-419.

unpublished note this point is strongly emphasized:

"Death—sudden or otherwise, but having no other demonstrable Action or Consequence than that of removing or incapacitating the means and existing conditions of the Manifestation of Life and Mind; and of course, therefore, suspending the Manifestation itself."¹

In 1814, at the period of his greatest distress, Coleridge has some striking remarks on the question of punishment and universal restitution. Writing to his Unitarian friend, Dr. Estlin, Coleridge comments on the latter's work on universal restitution. Universal restitution is true, he says, if it be granted that punishment is remedial only. At this time, Coleridge needed above all things a remedy for his ills. Gladly would he have undergone any remedial punishment. Yet his moral sense revolted at the thought. In view of his own condition, his words are to be noted carefully.

"I believe," he writes, "that punishment is essentially vindictive, i.e. expressive of abhorrence of Sin for its own exceeding sinfulness: from all experience (N.B.), as well as a priori from the constitution of the human Soul, I gather that without a miraculous intervention of Omnipotence the Punishment must continue as long as the soul, which I believe imperishable. God has promised no such miracle, he has covenanted no such mercy, I have no right therefore to believe or rely upon it. It may be so, but woe to me! if I presume on it. There is a great difference.....between the assertion, 'It is so!' and 'I have no right to assert the contrary!'"²

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1. British Museum Manuscript, Egerton 2801, folio 94.
Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.259.
 2. Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society, Vol.XV. pp.109-112.
Letter of April 5, 1814.

Crabb Robinson reports Coleridge as suggesting, in 1819, that "possibly the punishment of a future life may consist in bringing back the consciousness of the past."¹ Such a consciousness was a daily punishment for Coleridge. It is not difficult to see how such a suggestion as reported by Robinson arose. The point is, that though Coleridge was ready to discuss the kind of punishment, he did not alter his opinion concerning the meaning of punishment. Here, as elsewhere, his fine moral sense carried him to the heart of the problem.

Coleridge's interest in the question of immortality never flagged. The poem on Human Life, on the Denial of Immortality was written probably in 1815.² It echoes the arguments from "incompleteness" and from the supernatural character of man. If man's life ceases at death, then he is

"Surplus of Nature's dread activity."

Life loses all meaning.

"Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!
Thou hast no reason why! Thou canst have none;
Thy being's being is contradiction."

In 1816, belief in the immortality of the soul is included in the first half of his Confession of Faith. The influence of Kant is clear. "I believe in the life to come, not through arguments acquired by my understanding or discursive faculty, but chiefly and effectively, because so to believe is my duty, and in obedience to the commands of my conscience."³

1. Robinson; op.cit., II. p.129.

2. Poems, pp.425-426.

3. Omniana, p.430.

A letter to Allsop in 1820 reveals Coleridge's interest in the nature of existence after death: what differences may be expected for different individuals, what analogies throw light on the problem, and how the balance between other-worldliness and this-worldliness may best be preserved.¹ This continued interest in the problem indicates to what extent the doctrine was basic to Coleridge.

II. Immortality and Ethics.

Not only was belief in the immortality of the soul an essential part of Coleridge's religion, it was fundamental also in his conception of a rational ethics. In a sense this is to be expected, in view of his claim for the religious foundation of morality, and the close connection of the religious and moral sanctions that is a constant feature of his writings. Explicit evidence is afforded in a note written in a copy of Kant's Vermischte Schriften.²

"I cannot conceive a supreme moral Intelligence, unless I believe in my own Immortality—for I must believe in a whole system of apparent means to an end, which end had no existence—my Conscience, my progressive faculties, &c—But give up this, and Virtue wants all reason—Away with Stoic Hypocrisy! I know that in order to (?) the idea of Virtue, we must suppose the pure good will, or reverence for the Law as excellent in itself—but this very excellence supposes consequences, tho' not selfish ones. Let my maxim be capable of becoming the Law of all intelligent Beings—well! but this supposes an end possible by intelligent Beings—For if the Law be barren of

1. Allsop: Letters, Conversations & Recollections, p.60.—
Letter of August 8, 1820.

2. Kant: Vermischte Schriften in Ottery St. Mary Marginalia,
I. pp.33-35.

Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.154,233.

all consequences, what is it but words? To obey the Law for its own sake is really a mere sophism, in any other sense—you might as well put Abracadabra in its place. I can readily conceive that I have it in my nature to die a martyr, knowing that annihilation followed Death, if it were possible to believe that all other human Beings were immortal, and to be benefited by it—but any benefit that could affect only a set of transitory Animals, (for) which I could not deem myself worthy of any exertion in my behalf, how can I deem others (worthy) of the same lot? Boldly should I say—O Nature! I would rather not have been—let that which is to come so soon, come now—for what is all the intermediate space, but sense of utter worthlessness?

This strong protest against the attempt to separate ethics¹ from a belief in immortality finds poetic expression in the lines already quoted,

"Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!
Thou hast no reason why! Thou canst have none;
Thy being's being is contradiction."²

Such a protest is directed not only against Paley's ethical doctrine, based on consequence as the sole criterion, but runs counter to Kant's stoicism. Immortality is more than a mere postulate. This divergence from Kant will become more evident in the discussion of Coleridge's developed doctrine.

III. The Developed Doctrine.

It is evident that by the time Coleridge came to place his views before the public in the Aids of 1825, the main lines of his approach to the question had been firmly established. The familiar positions appear once more in his comments on Jeremy Taylor's argument that the disproportion between the prosperity of the wicked and that of the good in

1. Vide Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.137-161, for a discussion of Coleridge's ethical theory.

2. Poems, p.426.

this life makes it necessary to believe in "another state of things, where justice should rule, and virtue find her own portion."¹ Such an argument closely resembles Kant's. In view of Coleridge's acceptance of the Kantian emphasis on conscience in his earlier years, it is all the more surprising to see him breaking loose from the German thinker at this point, and asserting, in addition, other grounds for the belief. As Dr. Muirhead remarks, "Here, as elsewhere, the appeal, though not explicitly, is from Kant to Plato."²

While giving full credit to Taylor's argument from the disparity between moral worth and worldly prosperity, Coleridge argues that such an argument does not stand by itself, but points to something deeper, to the contradiction in human nature itself. "The Riddle of Fortune and Circumstance is but a form or effluence of the Riddle of Man."³ This contradiction in man is two-fold;—first, the lack of harmony between mind and will, "a struggle of jarring impulses;" and second, "the utter incommensurateness and the unsatisfying qualities" of the objects which the senses discover, and appetite desires.⁴ The solution therefore must be sought in the "something of human nature which is exclusively human."⁵ Senses and appetite are related to perishable things. But mind and will ally themselves with whatever has the character of

1. Aids, p.234.

2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.234.

3. Aids, p.235.

4. Ibid: p.235.

5. Ibid: p.235.

permanence amid continual flux, enduring "unchanged like a rainbow in a fast-flying shower." In short, such things as beauty, order, harmony, finality, law, are all akin to the "peculia of humanity," are all "congenera of Mind and Will, without which indeed they would not only exist in vain, as pictures for moles, but actually not exist at all."¹ The soul of man, therefore, as the subject of mind and will, "must likewise possess a principle of permanence, and be destined to endure."²

Again, Coleridge points to the universality of belief, the presentiment, the pre-assurance, of a life beyond.³ Such a pre-assurance cannot prove delusive, if all other prophecies of nature have their exact fulfilment. "In every other ingrafted word of promise, nature is found true to her word; and is it in her noblest creature, that she tells her first lie?"⁴

Such arguments, he readily admits, cannot amount to conclusive proof. Indeed, the immortality of the

1. Aids, p.236.

2. Ibid: p.236. Cf. Table Talk, p.19. "Either we have an immortal soul, or we have not. If we have not, we are beasts; the first and wisest of beasts, it may be; but still true beasts."

3. Aids, pp.236-238.

Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.352. "The argument from the mere universality of the belief, appears to me far stronger in favour of a surviving soul and a state after death, than for the existence of the Supreme Being."

4. Aids, p.237-238.

soul, as an idea, is indemonstrable. The weight of the arguments count, however, in a balance "where there is nothing in the opposite scale."¹ "In the scale of immortality" slight reasons are weighty in proportion to the lack of counterweights. On the other hand, there are "no facts in proof of the contrary, that would not prove equally well the cessation of the eye on the removal or diffraction of the eye-glass, and the dissolution or incapacity of the musician on the fracture of his instrument or its strings."²

IV. Christianity and Immortality.

In the light of the above it is not to be wondered why Coleridge should have scorned the arguments of Priestley and of Paley.³ The object of the Christian dispensation was not to satisfy man that there is a future state; neither is belief in immortality the exclusive attribute of Christianity. As a fundamental article of all religion it is necessarily an article of the Christian Faith.⁴ Coleridge's appeal to the authority of the New Testament, at the close of the argument in the Aids, is accordingly to the Epistles to

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1. Aids, p.236.
 2. Ibid: p.236. This is repeated in a note in Tennemann: Geschichte der Philosophie, Vol. II. pp.76-78, British Museum Copy.
Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.235n.
 3. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II. pp.51-52.
 4. Aids, p.233.

the Romans and to the Hebrews.¹ Here the emphasis is spiritual, rather than physical,² the whole argument turning, not on the proof of immortality afforded by Jesus, but on the salvation offered in Christ. This salvation is not from temporal death, or the penalties and afflictions of the present life. It is rather redemption from the condemnation to death to which the Law sentences all sinners.³ This death "must be the same death, from which they were saved by the faith of the Son of God."⁴ That is to say, it is spiritual death.

The question, Coleridge holds, is not whether there is a judgment to come, "and souls to suffer the dread sentence," but where grace and redemption may be found. That is to say, immortality is assumed. The question then concerns the content of this immortality.

"Not therefore, that there is a Life to come, and a future state; but what each individual Soul may hope for itself therein; and on what grounds; and that this state has been rendered an object of aspiration and fervent desire, and a source of thanksgiving and exceeding great joy; and by whom, and through whom, and for whom, and by what means and under what conditions—these are the peculiar and distinguishing fundamentals of the Christian Faith!"⁵

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1. Aids, pp.238-241, It is difficult to understand Muirhead's remark in this connection, Coleridge as Philosopher, p.235. "It (the appeal to St. Paul) is not, as we might otherwise have expected, to the argumentation of I Corinthians, Chap.xv. that we are referred." In view of his own exposition of Coleridge's thought, why "might we otherwise have expected" such an appeal?
 2. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.98, 145.
 3. Aids, p.240.
 4. Ibid: p.240.
 5. Ibid: p.241.

In its final form Coleridge's argument connects intimately the whole question of immortality with that of redemption. And, as is the case with both doctrines, the specific Christian element is prominent.

Dr. Muirhead's usually fine criticism is at fault at this point. He notes the relation between redemption and immortality in Coleridge's thought, holding that in Coleridge's hands the argument "turns from one for the survival of the soul in another life, into one for its salvation in this life by rising through grace to communion with God."¹ But this again is only half the truth. Salvation for Coleridge commences in this life and concerns itself with this life. But this is not the end of the matter. Redemption in this life points beyond to salvation in the life everlasting and "what each individual Soul may hope for itself therein."

Again the redemption of which Coleridge writes centres in Christ. Dr. Muirhead fails to appreciate this fully, as he omits from his concluding quotation from Coleridge certain significant words. The words "and by whom, and through whom, and for whom, and by what means and under what conditions" are omitted from the quotation that speaks of "the peculiar and distinguishing fundamentals of the Christian Faith."² It would appear that here, as elsewhere, Dr. Muirhead's own particular idealistic view of Christianity prevents a full appreciation of the specific Christian strain in Coleridge's thought.

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.236.

2. Ibid: p.236. Cf. Aids, p.241.

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Coleridge's final word in this instance—"I believe Moses, I believe Paul; but I believe in Christ."¹ It cannot be dismissed as mere verbal rhetoric, or explained away on the grounds of morbidness.² It reflects a genuine element in his experience and thought.

V. Some Additional Considerations.

(a) The Nature of the After-Life.

Coleridge is not concerned with the phenomenal conditions of the life everlasting. Self-consciousness, at least, is essential. "Without self-consciousness there is no subject for immortality."³ And this implies growth in some manner, some "continued progression,"⁴ some development "into the perfected Spirit."⁵ But aside from this, he disclaims any knowledge of how self-consciousness functions.

(b) Eternal Punishment.

In a letter to Cottle Coleridge discusses the question of eternal punishment.⁶ After commenting on the New Testament use of αἰώνιος, and on the declarations in Scripture that all flesh shall be saved finally, Coleridge

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1. Aids, p.241.
 2. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.36,255.
 3. Southey: Life of Wesley, II. p.9ln.
 4. Ibid: II. p.9ln.
 5. Letters, II. pp.762-763. - Letter of August 13, 1832.
 6. Cottle: Early Recollections, I. pp.204-208. In criticism of a passage in Religious Musings as "far too bold," and "easily misconstrued into Spinosism," Coleridge writes, "I was very young when I wrote that poem." This indicates a date when Coleridge's opinions were fairly mature. Cottle places the letter, quite arbitrarily, between one dated October 18, 1796, and one of 1807.

holds: first, "that it would be more pious to assert nothing concerning it (the doctrine of eternal punishment) one way or the other;" second, that if men cannot be diverted from wickedness by the offer of eternal blessedness, by the love of God, by gratitude, by the fear of punishment unknown as to extent and duration, but "unimaginably great," then the term eternal holds little significance by itself; third, that "scarcely any" believe in eternal punishment with any practical reference to themselves. "They all hope in God's mercy, till they make it a presumptuous watchword for religious indifference." Fourth, Coleridge holds that a Christian stands in a perilous state "if he has gotten no further than to avoid evil from the fear of hell."¹ "To him who but for a moment felt the influence of God's presence, the thought of eternal exclusion from the sense of that presence would be the worst hell his imagination could conceive." Finally, there is the relation that exists between man and God, as creature and Creator.

"I admit of no right," he concludes, "no claim of a creature on its Creator. I speak only of hopes and of faith deduced from inevitable reason, the gift of the Creator; from his acknowledged attributes. Above all, immortality is a free gift, which we neither do, nor can deserve."

That this is a mature opinion is confirmed by a

1. Cf. Table Talk, p.113. - September 28, 1830, where he rejects the idea of "a fiery hell," and suggests that for a spiritual being no other hell could equal the "anarchy of our powers," the "conscious madness" resultant from the divorce of will from memory, fancy, understanding and reason.

note, dated July 28, 1826, in his Semina Rerum, in which Coleridge discusses the self-condemning nature of sin.¹

"The Scriptures more than announce and affirm the great law of the Spiritual World, that Sin generates misery and weakness, and that these instead of removing Sin, add to the Strength of the Habit and diminish the Power of resistance; and this process of destruction has no other end or limit but that of the Subject, in which it is set up, and therefore if the one be imperishable, the other must be everlasting."

The note concludes in a similar vein to that of the letter to Cottle.

"Is there no difference between the positions—God will put in force the law of everlasting Death on such and such men—and—It has not been revealed to us, that God will not: Surely, this is one most striking instance of the propriety of a negative Belief—it's sure as you have an immortal Soul, so certain is your everlasting damnation, if God does not interfere: and God has given you neither promise or assurance that he will. The impenitent Sinner that is proof against this, is a rock which no force can make feel."

The whole discussion reveals clear insight into the problem. With his insistence on fellowship with God through God's grace, Coleridge dares not make any dogmatic statement that would limit the grace and action of God. On the other hand, he admits there is a possibility, at least, of self-exclusion from the fellowship of God.

(c) Conditional Immortality.

The doctrine of conditional immortality receives scant attention from Coleridge. In view of the close connection between immortality and redemption in his thought, some discussion of the question might be expected. But there are few

1. MS.C, pp.88-90.

explicit reference in his writings. The most important is a note in Baxter's Autobiography.¹ Here Coleridge rejects definitely the whole conception, after admitting the attractiveness of certain aspects of the theory.² He criticizes severely the attempt to ground the belief in immortality on objective proof from miracles, whereas "in the very essence of religion and even of morality the evidence, and the preparation for its reception, must be subjective." This is derived from the conscience and the "holy instinct" of the race. Coleridge continues as one who has found, "in the impossibility of not looking forward to consciousness after the dissolution of the body (corpus phenomenon)," next to divine grace

"the strongest and indeed only efficient support against the still recurring temptation of adopting, nay, wishing the truth of Spinoza's notion, that the survival of consciousness is the highest prize and consequence of the highest virtue, and that of all below this mark the lot after death is self-oblivion and the cessation of individual being."³

On the whole, however, Coleridge is content with the enunciation of the positive aspects of the connection between immortality and redemption. This is based on the conviction of the immortality of the soul. "Immortality is one thing, a happy immortality another."⁴

"Deeply am I persuaded of Luther's position," he writes, "that no man can worthily estimate, or feel in the depth

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1. Notes on English Divines, II. p.52.
 2. Cf. Ibid: I. pp.51, 253.
 3. Ibid: II. p.52.
 4. Ibid: I. p.265.

of his being, the Incarnation and Crucifixion of the Son of God who is a stranger to the terror of immortality as ingenerate in man, while it is yet unquelled by the faith in God as the Almighty Father."¹

(d) Universal Restoration.

There is some evidence to indicate that Coleridge came to adopt, not indeed as a dogma, but rather as an optimistic hope, the theory of universal restoration. He rejects the Roman Catholic theory of Purgatory,² but leans to belief in progress of some sort. The note³ in which this hope is set forth has never been published and may therefore be given at length.

"As far, therefore," he writes, "as a firm faith in a redemptive process, never suspended, tho' not always apparent, may be called Optimism, so far I still remain an Optimist. But that the process consists in a moral and intellectual progression of the Mass of Mankind, or of a whole People or Nation—this no longer appears to me so clear a point as it did during that period of Life when the Head took the Heart for its' Chief Counsellor, and when whatever of Good was stirring within me I supposed myself to have in common with all men. But I have since then been made to reflect, tho' I have outlived the Optimism of my Youth and early Manhood, when my fancy and my ingenuity were strained to find good in everything, and I strove to think even

Guilt and anguish and the wormy Grave
Shapes of a Dream.

I still retain, I dare not forego, the faith in a continued tho' Spiral Ascent of Humanity. How indeed in the absence of this faith could we without mockery prefer the prayer—Thy Kingdom come! Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven! Evil is not eternal. It began, and not from God. Therefore it must end and by God."⁴

1. Notes on English Divines, II. p.52.

2. Ibid: I. pp.64, 251.

3. British Museum MS., Egerton 2801, folio 258a, b.

4. Or "by God's Will" or "God's Act." The MS. is torn here.

Coleridge does not rest merely in this assurance of the ultimate triumph of God. There is something to be added. God is already in action against evil. That evil "must end and by God" might be inferred "from the idea of a supreme and holy Will." The second truth has been revealed by Revelation.

"Revelation has taught us a further truth and one which rightly understood might perhaps conduct us to conclusions of a less general character—this awful truth that in order to act, as a renewing principle of moral life, on the fallen nature in us, God first assumed the humanity in himself. The Word that was in the beginning, in whom was Life and that Life the Light of Men (i.e. the ground of that Reason, which constitutes our proper Humanity) became flesh (καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν) that 'as by Man came Death, so also by Man might the Resurrection come.' He dwelt among men as a man, thenceforward (for as many as received him) indwells in men as the Spirit of Truth. (John xiv. 17,18)."¹

This last reveals how closely connected in Coleridge's mind were the two doctrines of immortality and redemption. That is to say, immortality in the last resort, is a religious idea. Moreover, in his hands, it becomes a specifically Christian idea.

1. British Museum MS., Egerton 2801, folio 257. There are two versions of this note. The longer is given above.

CHAPTER X.

The Theory of Society and the Church.

I. Introduction.

Two of the chief features of Coleridge's later thought are: first, his firm belief in the necessity of the religious foundation of society; and second, an equally firm belief in the corporate nature of Christianity. The 1830 publication, On the Constitution of the Church and State according to the Idea of Each, is not to be regarded as an isolated product of his variegated mind. Rather, it expresses a theory of society intimately connected with his whole religious philosophy. Moreover, it embodies much of the material proposed for the concluding section of the Opus Maximum, the main labour of his life, as outlined in 1828. The outline reads:-

"Gives the Philosophy, and a philosophic Abstract of the History of the Visible Church & of Christendom from the Apostles to the present times—and ends with a view of the Church of England as an estate of the Realm (ἐκκλησία) and the two-fold Function of it's Ministers, as Preachers & Members of the Church of Christ (ἐκκλησία) and as Trustees and Functionaries of the States—with the equal and opposite Evils of Confounding and of dividing the Functions—Closes with an Exhortation to the Clergy and a solemn Appeal to the (orthodox) Dissenters."¹

1. MS.C, printed in Snyder: op.cit., pp.7-8.

Coleridge's 1816 belief in the Church of England as "the most Apostolic Church"¹ is seen here in further development. His naïveté need arouse no comment. The point of interest is the place assigned to the Church in his all-embracing scheme.

Before turning to the consideration of his mature views, as found in Church and State, two things may be said. First, these views are the result of a long process of development; and second, this development took place against a very definite social and political background. The second of these two considerations may be dealt with briefly.

By the time Coleridge came to write his Church and State he had lived through the upheaval in social and political thought caused by the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the Irish troubles and the growth of mechanized industry. He had seen the movement for reform grow among the new working classes, created by industry, and among the Dissenters and Roman Catholics—in the case of the first group directed towards political recognition, and in that of the second towards the attainment of equality of status with members of the Established Church. By 1830 the movement for reform was in tidal flood. The Catholic Emancipation Act was already a thing of the past, and the Reform Bill was but two short years away. The waves of reform were beating with insistent force against the foundations of the Church, established, wealthy, inefficient, corrupt, and set for the defence of the status quo.

1. Aids, p.257.

The Church was in imminent danger of being engulfed by the new Liberalism. The protest of Newman and his colleagues, after the passing of the Reform Bill, is a matter of history. Previous to this, however, the Catholic Emancipation Act had afforded Coleridge the occasion for his particular protest. It was on altogether different grounds from those of the Oxford scholars that Coleridge based his defence of the Church. Nevertheless, he did much to revive the conception of the Church as something other than a department of the State on the one hand, and a voluntary association on the other. In this respect, at least, Coleridge prepared the way for the High Church Party that followed.

II. Early Views.

With regard to the first of the two considerations noted above—the development of his mind on the social aspects of his religious philosophy—it is essential to notice that Coleridge had not only witnessed, but he had lived in sympathy with, much of the new spirit. His enthusiasm for the ideas of the French Revolution blossomed into the scheme of Pantisocracy. Previously, however, in his ode on the Destruction of the Bastille,¹ he had bidden England follow France's example. With the growth of the new tyranny in France his sympathy waned, and by 1798 his hopes were completely dashed.

1. Poems, pp.10-11, written probably, 1789.

His disgust and disillusionment are clearly revealed in his France: An Ode.¹ During these years his sense of social injustice flamed high. In Religious Musings he prophesies the overthrow of wrong and of intrenched power,² including "mitred Atheism."³ A footnote to the 1797 edition makes it clear that he contemplated the early disestablishment of the Church. The footnote reads:-

"This passage alludes to the French Revolution: and the subsequent paragraph to the downfall of Religious Establishments. I am convinced that the Babylon of the Apocalypse does not apply to Rome exclusively; but to the union of Religion with Power and Wealth, wherever it is found."⁴

This note was repeated in the 1803 edition, but dropped subsequently.

This view is reflected again in the Allegoric Vision which served as an introduction to Coleridge's first theological lecture in Bristol, in August 1795. Coleridge was at the time a thorough-going Unitarian. He saw in Unitarianism the via media between the orthodox and moribund Church, on the one hand, and infidelity and materialism, on the other. The Church of England is symbolized by the figure of Superstition in the Vision.⁵ Coleridge considered the connection between the Church and the State one of the chief evils of the day.

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1. Poems, pp.243-247.
 2. Ibid: pp.118-121, lines 260-322.
 3. Ibid: p.121, line 334.
 4. Ibid: p.121n.
 5. Ibid: pp.589-594.

"As far as I am able to decide," he wrote early in 1798, "the most pressing evils and those of which the speedy removal is the most practicable, are these—the union of Religion with the Government, and those other political Institutions and abuses which I need not name."¹

The Conciones ad Populum of 1795 reveals his mind further. Religion, he is convinced, is the cure for the social ills of the day. As a crusading Christian Socialist, he voices his platform:

"Go, preach the Gospel to the poor.' By its simplicity it will meet their comprehension, by its benevolence soften their affections, by its precepts it will direct their conduct, by the vastness of its motives ensure their obedience."²

The religion he advocates is not a churchless Christianity. "Religion and reason are but poor substitutes for church and constitution."³ But he is no less sure that the religion is not that of the Church as constituted and established. He inveighs against the conservative Churchmen who support war for fear of the loss of their positions, and prophesies with youthful vigour, "The age of priesthood will be no more—that of philosophers and of Christians will succeed and the torch of superstition be extinguished for ever."⁴ The Watchman of March 9th, 1796, carries on the crusade with a satirical article entitled, "A Defence of the Church Establishment from its Similitude to the Grand and Simple Laws of the Planetary System."⁵

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1. Unpublished Letters, I. p.86.
 2. Essays on His Own Times, I. pp.22-23.
 3. Ibid: I. pp.13-14.
 4. Ibid: I. pp.46-47.
 5. Ibid: I. pp.128-129.

In 1800 Coleridge is still proud of his Dissenting principles. He writes harshly of Anglican pride and contempt of Dissenters.¹ In 1801 he voices the typical Dissenting principle that the state should regard all religions equally. "The state should be to the religions under its protection as a well-drawn picture, equally eyeing all in the room."²

The change in Coleridge's attitude to the Establishment dates from 1802, and may be said to follow closely upon the great revolution in his metaphysical and theological thought that marked this period of his life. A letter to George Coleridge, dated June 3rd, 1802, carries the first expression of the new viewpoint. The recently concluded French Concordat, which he considers a "wretched business," has the merit that it "first occasioned me to think accurately and with consecutive Logic on the force and meaning of the word Established Church."

"The result of my reflections," he continues, "was very greatly in favour of the Church of England maintained as it at present is, and those scruples, which, if I mistake not, we had in common when I last saw you, as to the effects and scriptural propriety of the (supposed) alliance of Church and State were wholly removed."³

He reveals also that his study of the question has taken him to William Warburton, whose Alliance between Church and State appeared in 1736.⁴

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1. Unpublished Letters, I. p.136.
 2. Anima Poetae, p.18. Cf. Omniana, p.353.
 3. Unpublished Letters, I. p.198.
 4. H.N.Coleridge in the 1839 edition of Church & State remarks on the relation between Coleridge's views and those of Warburton. Vide 1839 edition, pp.xx-xxix. In the letter of 1802, Coleridge refers to Warburton's system as one "which I rather dislike and suspect."

By 1811 his study has carried him to Hobbes and Locke. An article in The Courier of September 26th is of interest. The problem of the relations of Church and State, "perhaps the most difficult problem in the whole science of politics," is one which the efforts of centuries have failed to solve. In practice compromise has prevailed. No exact definition of the boundaries which separate Church and State has been reached.

"We still want a complete table of all those points, with which the magistrate has no right to interfere, as well as those which the teacher of religion may be rightfully prevented from meddling with."¹

The immediate occasion of the article was the "Catholic Claims." Coleridge has now diverted his early attack on the Establishment to direct it against the Church of Rome. The Allegoric Vision of 1795 re-appears, slightly altered.² The Vision appears once more. As an introduction to the Lay Sermon of 1817,³ it serves to illustrate Coleridge's principle of the reconciliation of opposites. Insistent on the falsehood of extremes, he points out that as religion is the golden mean between superstition and atheism, so the righteous government of a righteous people is the mean between a selfish and tyrannous aristocracy and the unbridled rule of the mob.

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1. The Courier, September 26, 1811. Printed in Essays on His Own Times, III. pp.925-932. The Article is entitled—"On the Catholic Claims, as matter of absolute Right; with a Critique on the Systems of Toleration and Religious Rights, of Hobbes, Locke, and Warburton." This particular article carried the discussion only as far as Hobbes. The prophecy, "To be continued," was never fulfilled.
 2. The Courier, August 31, 1811. Poems, p.589n.
 3. Poems, p.589n.

III. Developed Theory.

In The Friend of 1818, among the avowed objects of which was the inculcation of right principles of political philosophy, as well as of religion and morality, Coleridge offers a classification of social theories on the basis of his distinction between sense, understanding, and reason. From his criticism of the theories of Hobbes and Rousseau his own views become clear. In the first place, he is certain that no theory of political obligation, based wholly and exclusively on one of the three—sense, understanding or reason—is adequate. It is therefore necessarily false. This is all the more surprizing, in view of Coleridge's usual insistence on the primacy of reason. But in matters of social theory, as in psychology, he is quite clear.

"Distinct notions do not suppose different things. When we make a threefold distinction in human nature, we are fully aware that it is a distinction, not a division, and that in every act of mind, the man unites the properties of sense, understanding, and reason."¹

With this in mind, Coleridge is ready to reject Hobbes' theory of fear as the source of political obligation, based as it was on a sensationalist psychology.² As against fear, Coleridge claims that the spirit of law is "the true necessity, which compels man into the social state, now and always, by a still-beginning, never-ceasing force of moral cohesion."³

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1. The Friend, Section I. Essay II. p.117n.
 2. Ibid, Section I. Essay II. pp.110-117.
 3. Ibid, Essay II. p.114.

He is equally ready to reject Rousseau's theory, based on a misapplication of the principle of reason. He contends for "the actual man" as against Rousseau's "abstract reason."¹ The true starting-point for any theory of society must be man as a moral, responsible being. The groundwork of all law and justice is the principle "that a person can never become a thing, nor be treated as such without wrong."² This is the foundation. To Coleridge property is also sacred, and "the chief object for which men first formed themselves into a state was not the protection of their lives but of their property." If climate and soil conditions preclude property, except in a personal sense, men remain in the domestic state and "form neighbourhoods, but not governments."³

The aims of the State are of two kinds, negative and positive. The negative ends consist in "the protection of life, of personal freedom, of property, of reputation, and of religion, from foreign and from domestic attacks."⁴ The positive ends are four in number: first, "to make the means of subsistence more easy to each individual;" second, to provide a just distribution of "the comforts and conveniences which humanize and ennoble" human nature; third, to ensure the hope of betterment for the individual and his children; fourth, education—moral, religious and intellectual.⁵ This four-fold conception of

1. The Friend, Essay IV. pp.124-136.

2. The Friend, Section I. Essay IV. p.127. The influence of Kant is apparent.

3. Ibid: p.134.

4. Ibid: Section I. Essay IX. p.171.

5. Ibid: pp.171-172. For a fuller treatment see Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, pp.165-176.

the positive aims of the state becomes a three-fold one in the Lay Sermon of 1817,¹ and a two-fold one in Church and State of 1830. But the conception of the State as dependent upon a proper balance² of the ends remains constant in all his later writings.

This sense of balance is nowhere better revealed than in the 1817 Lay Sermon. The "existing distresses and discontents" are due to the "overbalance of the commercial spirit in consequence of the absence or weakness of the counterweights."³ These counterweights are three: first, "the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry;"⁴ second, philosophy;⁵ third, religion.⁶ Economic interests must not overbalance ethical and religious interests. In the light of the final aims of the State, Coleridge is hopeful that "the spirit of commerce is itself capable of being at once counteracted and enlightened by the spirit of the State, to the advantage of both."⁷ His Christian Socialism comes to the fore as he pleads, "If we are a Christian nation, we must learn to act nationally, as well as individually, as Christians."⁸ Industry must be subject to

1. Lay Sermon, Biog. Lit. p.432.

2. Coleridge uses the word and its synonyms constantly, e.g. 43 times in the short Lay Sermon.

3. Lay Sermon, 1817, Biog.Lit. p.402. Cf. Gloyne: Coleridge's Theory of the Church in the Social Order. Church History, Vol. III. #4, December 1934, pp.288-289.

4. Ibid: p.402.

5. Ibid: p.403.

6. Ibid: p.405.

7. Ibid: p.436.

8. Ibid: p.439. Cf. His remarks on Sir Robert Peel's 1818 Bill regulating the conditions and hours of work of factory children. Watson: op.cit., pp.171-187.

regulation, and men must regard their positions as "offices of trust" for God and the country.¹ It was this last consideration that had prompted the lay sermon of the previous year, The Statesman's Manual. In this Coleridge had pressed the points: first, that by its emphasis on the universal and eternal the Bible enabled men to see the particular and temporal in their true perspective;² second, that historically the Bible had been "the main lever" by which the moral and intellectual character of Europe had been determined.³

Coming to the final presentation of Coleridge's views in Church and State—written in 1829—it is at once evident that a great deal has been anticipated in the earlier works. With his mind filled with the doctrine of ideas, Coleridge brings the whole question of State and Church to the touchstone of the idea of each. What Coleridge means by the term idea in this instance is the ultimate aim of the State and of the Church.⁴ An idea may exert a powerful influence on a man's thought and action "without his being distinctly conscious of the same."⁵ This Coleridge illustrates by an appeal to the history of England.

1. Lay Sermon, 1817, Biog. Lit. p.440.

2. Statesman's Manual, Biog. Lit. p.322.

3. Ibid: p.323.

4. Church and State, p.5. "By an idea, I mean, (in this instance) that conception of a thing, which is not abstracted from any particular state, form, or mode, in which the thing may happen to exist at this or that time; nor yet generalized from any number or succession of such forms or modes; but that which is given by the knowledge of its ultimate aim."

5. Ibid: p.6.

The theory or conception of an original social contract, which, as treated by Rousseau, is a "pure fiction," "an idle fancy," "at once false and foolish," and "incapable of historic proof as a fact," and therefore "senseless as a theory,"¹ takes on new significance if regarded from the standpoint of the idea of "an ever-originating social contract."² Thus regarded, "it constitutes the whole ground of the difference between subject and serf, between a commonwealth and a slave plantation."³ What has happened in England is that the Constitution, as an idea, has impressed itself on the mind of the nation.⁴ In thus proving historically the reality of an idea, Coleridge paves the way for his contention that "the final criterion by which all particular frames of government must be tried" is in fact the idea of the State.⁵

Coleridge uses the term state in a double sense: "a larger, in which it is equivalent to Realm and includes the Church, and a narrower, in which it is distinguished quasi per antithesin from the Church, as in the phrase Church and State."⁶ The State, in the larger sense, is defined as a "body politic, having the principle of its unity within itself."⁷ To

1. Church and State, pp. 7-9. -----

2. Ibid: p. 9. This reflects the statement in The Friend that "an original (in reality, rather an ever-originating) contract is a very natural and significant mode of expressing the reciprocal duties of subject and sovereign." It is a means of expressing the "ever-continuing causes of social union."—op.cit., p. 116. Cf. the similar use of original in the treatment of original sin.

3. Ibid: p. 9.

4. Ibid: p. 14.

5. Ibid: p. 15.

6. Ibid: p. 19.

7. Ibid: p. 20.

Coleridge's dialectic mind, the idea of the State, in the larger sense, presents two poles: the State proper, and the National Church. "These are two poles of the same magnet; the magnet itself, which is constituted by them, is the CONSTITUTION of the nation."¹ Further, the major interests of the State—the realm, the nation²—are two: permanence and progression. Under these two all the other interests of the State may be comprized.³ Coleridge holds that permanence is connected with the land and the landed property,⁴ while progression is connected with the four classes: the mercantile, the manufacturing, the distributive, and the professional.⁵ These four classes he designates the Personal Interest, as distinct from the Landed Interest.⁶ If, then, permanence be accounted for by the presence of a Landed Interest, and progression by the presence of a Personal Interest, and if under these two heads all the interests of the State be comprized, there would seem to be little room for any third element, such as a National Church. Coleridge holds, however, that both permanence and progression depend on a necessary antecedent condition: namely, a "continuing and progressive civilization."⁷ The object of the National Church

1. Church and State, p.33.

2. Coleridge uses the words as equivalents. Cf. op.cit., pp.19,33.

3. Church and State, p.22.

4. Ibid: p.22.

5. Ibid: p.24.

6. Ibid: p.28.

7. Ibid: p.49.

is "to secure and improve that civilization, without which the nation could be neither permanent nor progressive."¹

To examine the general theory more closely—Coleridge holds that the unity of the State may be achieved either by a concentration of forces, as in a pure monarchy, or by "equipoise and interdependency" of the forces, "the lex equilibrii, the principle prescribing the means and conditions by and under which this balance is to be established and preserved, being the constitution of the state."² The first type is unknown in history, however. An example of the second is the constitution of England.³ The health of the body politic depends upon the proper balance between permanence and progression, between the Landed and Personal Interests. Historically, this has been accomplished in the establishment of the two houses of Parliament.⁴ The King, in whom the executive

1. Church and State, p.51.

2. Ibid: p.20. Cf. Table Talk, p.108. "All temporal government must rest on a compromise of interests and abstract rights."

3. This double appeal to history and to philosophy has led to some discussion. Cobban, (Edmund Burke and the Revolt against the Eighteenth Century, p.179) writes, "Though Coleridge's intention was to make philosophy and not history the foundation of his theory of the State, a conflict exists between his philosophic and his historical appeal, and he turns more and more to the positive facts of historical evolution in the development of his theory." Cobban therefore rejects Coleridge's idea of the State as pseudo-philosophy. As against this view, Muirhead credits Coleridge's use of the term, in the sense of "the intuitively apprehended meaning of experience" as one of philosophic value. (Coleridge as Philosopher, p.162n.) The weight of evidence appears to be on Muirhead's side. Cf. Coleridge's words, "a principle, existing in the only way in which a principle can exist,—in the minds and consciences of the people whose duties it prescribes, and whose rights it determines."—Church and State, p.14

4. Church and State, pp.28-32.

power is vested, serves as "the beam of the constitutional scale."¹ Thus have the interests of permanence and progression been reconciled and the interest of the State as a whole been preserved.²

Coleridge elaborates two conditions for the proper working of the constitution.³ Seizing on the term body politic as a "metaphor so commensurate, so pregnant," he draws the analogy between the body politic and the body natural.⁴ In the first place, the health of the living organism depends on a proper proportion between the "imponderable agents, magnetic or galvanic," and the fluids in the glands and vessels. Similarly, the health of the body politic depends on a "due proportion of the free and permeative life and energy of the Nation to the organized powers brought within containing channels." A proper relation must exist between "the indeterminable, but yet actual influences of intellect, information, prevailing principles and tendencies" and "the regular, definite, and legally recognized Powers." The analogy does not run "on all four legs," as Coleridge admits, the difference being that in the case of the body politic the

1. Cf. Notes on English Divines, II. pp.7-8.

2. Again the double appeal to history and to philosophy is made. Coleridge insists that he is not giving an historical account of the legislative body, but is merely asserting that "the line of evolution, however sinuous, has still tended to this point, sometimes with, sometimes without, not seldom, perhaps, against, the intention of the individual actors, but always as if a power greater and better than the men themselves, had intended it for them." — Church and State, p.32.

3. Cf. Muirhead, Coleridge as Philosopher, p.185 seq. for a fuller treatment of this.

4. Church and State, pp.105 seq.

permeative forces are capable of being transformed into the regular, by "attaching a measured and determinate political right, or privilege, thereto." A disproportion of the two elements results in disaster. The Greek democracies collapsed by an excess of the permeative power, Venice by the contrary extreme.¹

The second condition of political health, according to Coleridge, is "a due proportion of the potential (latent, dormant) to the actual Power."² The first condition, the balance of the permeative and the organized, may really amount to a "polarization" of the actual power.³ Together they form the actual power, in toto. The second condition deals with actual and potential, and thus touches the central problem of sovereignty. By means of his double argument from history and philosophy Coleridge shows that the Constitution of England, according to the idea, differs radically from both an absolute monarchy and a democratic republic, in both of which the people delegates its whole power. "Nothing is left obscure, nothing suffered to remain in the Idea, unevolved." This results in the whole will of the body politic being in act at every moment.⁴ In contrast, the English nation has delegated its power, but "not without measure and circumscription." "The

1. Church and State, p.108. The burden of Coleridge's 1817 message had been the threat to the nation's permanence and progression if the balance continued uneven, due to the under-representation in Parliament of the new industrial, mercantile and professional classes. Cf. Muirhead, Coleridge as Philosopher, p.186.

2. Ibid: pp.119-120.

3. Ibid: p.120.

4. Ibid: pp.121-122.

Omnipotence of Parliament" is therefore only a lawyer's bombastic phrase for the "restraints and remedies within the competence of our Law-courts."¹ Taken in an absolute sense, it is sheer hyperbole.² The precise extent of this reserved potentiality, "not contained within the rule and compass of law," is, by its very nature, indeterminable a priori.³ The principle exists and works only as an idea, seen only by the historian in the "rare and predestined epochs of Growth and Reparation" when the nation in travail voices its "unific mind and energy," "that Voice of the People which is the Voice of God."⁴

In the last resort, therefore, sovereignty must go back to that intangible, but very real, national consciousness. This, in turn, as will become evident, rests ultimately on a religious foundation.⁵ This theory of sovereignty marks a new achievement in English political thought, anticipating much that is best in later thinkers.⁶ Dr. Cobban's recent study of Coleridge has brought this out clearly. His conclusion is:

"Coleridge was one of the first to denounce the theory of sovereignty in so many words, and that not because of the rival claims of any other association inside or outside the State, but because of the inherect extravagance of the conception itself. To overthrow

1. Church and State, p. 122.

2. Ibid: p.124.

3. Ibid: p.127.

4. Ibid: p.127.

5. Cf. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.190.

6. Muirhead: op.cit., p.189 mentions Green and Bosanquet.

State sovereignty and substitute for it the sovereignty of a thousand and one petty groups, as some political thinkers have attempted to do, is mere multiplication of evil. Coleridge goes on different principles. Against the Imperial and Papal theory of sovereignty, he asserts the national and Protestant principles of the individual conscience and national consciousness, things which cannot be defined in terms of institutional sovereignties."¹

IV. The National Church.

It is only in the light of Coleridge's social theory that his conception of the National Church can be judged. It is, in fact, the necessary corollary of such a theory. Conscience, both individual and national, must be created, stimulated and maintained. Only thus can the national existence be preserved. Here, then, is the raison d'être of the National Church. It is the other—and the necessary—pole in the idea of the realm.

In practice, this idea of the National Church means the existence of a third estate in the realm.² The support of this third estate is derived from the nationality. By this Coleridge means that reserve which, according to his reading of history, was set aside for the benefit of the nation when the division of the land into hereditable estates first took place.³ This third estate is set over against the first estate of the Landed Interest and the second estate of the Personal Interest. These two latter, with their respective interests of permanence and progression, constitute the State,

1. Cobban: op.cit., p.183. Quoted Muirhead: op.cit., pp.189-190.

2. A note of June 1820 indicates that the conception of the Church, as a third estate was one of Coleridge's early "fixed points." Notes on English Divines, II. pp.114-118.

3. Church and State, pp.34-39.

in the narrow sense. The interest of the third estate, which Coleridge names the clerisy, is the "cultivation", "the harmonious developement of those qualities and faculties that characterize our humanity."¹ Its interest may be said to comprize two of the great ends of Coleridge's State, as laid down in The Friend. Here the third great positive end is to ensure for the individual

"the hope of bettering his own condition and that of his children," seeing that, "his Maker has distinguished him from the brute that perishes, by making hope and instinct of his nature and an indispensable condition of his moral and intellectual progression."²

The fourth positive end is defined as:

"The development of those faculties which are essential to his human nature by the knowledge of his moral and religious duties, and the increase of his intellectual powers in as great a degree as is compatible with the other ends of social union, and does not involve a contradiction."³

In The Friend Coleridge is quite emphatic that education is one of the chief ends of government.

"It is that only which makes the abandonment of the savage state an absolute duty; and that constitution is the best, under which the average sum of useful knowledge is the greatest, and the causes that awaken and encourage talent and genius, the most powerful and various."⁴

In Church and State all this is re-emphasized.

The National Church is "the especial and constitutional organ and means:" first, of securing to the subjects of the realm

1. Church and State, p.49.

2. The Friend, Section I. Essay IX. p.171.

3. Ibid: Section I. Essay IX. p.172.

4. Ibid: p.172.

"the hope, the chance, of bettering their own or their children's condition;" second, of developing in every nature those faculties, and providing that knowledge and those attainments which are "necessary to qualify him for a member of the State, the free subject of a civilized realm."¹ Historically, trade, commerce and the arts have aided the National Church in the discharge of her first duty.

"Yet still the nationality, under all its defalcations, continues to feed the higher ranks by drawing up whatever is worthiest from below, and thus maintains the principle of Hope in the humblest families, while it secures the possessions of the rich and noble."²

Again, the second great object, "civilization with freedom," is achieved by the National Church. It assures a continuing and progressive civilization by binding the national life together in its past, present and future; by the communication to every citizen of the knowledge necessary for the understanding of their rights and the discharge of their corresponding duties; and the securing for the nation a "character of general civilization" equal, if not superior, to that of other nations. This character, Coleridge adds, "equally with, or rather more than, fleets, armies and revenue, forms the ground of its defensive and offensive power."³ The duty of the National Church is fulfilled in "the communication of that degree and kind of knowledge to all, the possession of

1. Church and State, p.88.

2. Ibid: p.88.

3. Ibid: p.50

which is necessary for all in order to their CIVILITY."¹

By civility, Coleridge means "all the qualities essential to a citizen, and devoid of which no people or class of the people can be calculated on by the rulers and leaders of the state for the conservation or promotion of its essential interests."² Hence the State has a right to demand of the National Church, that its instructions should be fitted to diffuse legality throughout the people.

To accomplish this work of civic and cultural education, the National Church is comprized of two orders. The first, or smaller, serves to instruct the second, or larger. Its members are "to remain at the fountain heads of the humanities, in cultivating and enlarging the knowledge already possessed, and in watching over the interests of physical and moral science."³ It, in point of fact, constitutes the universities.⁴ The larger group, on the other hand, is to be so distributed throughout the realm as not to leave "even the smallest integral part or division without a resident, guide, guardian and instructor."⁵ Every parish would thus have a parson and a school-master.⁶

This educative class, the clerisy, is not, strictly speaking, an ecclesiastical or religious order. In

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1. Church and State, p.65.
 2. Ibid: p.65.
 3. Ibid: p.49.
 4. Ibid: p.63.
 5. Ibid: p.50.
 6. Ibid: p.63.

its primary and original intention it comprehended "the learned of all denominations—the sages and professors of..... all the so-called liberal arts and sciences, the possession and application of which constitute the civilization of a country, as well as the Theological."¹ Lawyers, doctors, musicians, architects, scientists and mathematicians are included in Coleridge's comprehensive list. He holds that religion, though an "indispensable ally," is not "the essential constitutive end" of the National Church.² Nevertheless, the theological order is given precedence, since under the head of theology language, history, logic, ethics and philosophy were originally comprized. Its importance is due to the fact that

"the SCIENCE of Theology was the root and the trunk of the knowledges that civilized man,.....it gave unity and the circulating sap of life to all other sciences..... Under the name theology, were comprised all the main aids, instruments, and materials of NATIONAL EDUCATION, the nisus formativus of the body politic, the shaping and informing spirit, which educing, i.e. eliciting, the latent man in all the natives of the soil, trains them up to be citizens of the country, free subjects of the realm."³

Theologians are also given precedence because

"to divinity belong those fundamental truths, which are the common ground-work of our civil and our religious duties, not less indispensable to a right view of our temporal concerns, than to a rational faith respecting our immortal well-being. (Not without celestial observations can terrestrial charts be accurately construed)."⁴

Coleridge is quite emphatic on this point that a stable society must rest ultimately on a religious foundation.

1. Church and State, p.53.

2. Ibid: p.52.

3. Ibid: pp.55-56.

4. Ibid: p.56.

He will not separate the educational and civic functions of the National Church from religion. Education is not synonymous with mere enlightenment or instruction.¹ These alone will not accomplish the aim of the State.

"The morality which the state requires in its citizens for its own well-being and ideal immortality, and without reference to their spiritual interest as individuals, can only exist for the people in the form of religion:.....In fine, Religion, true or false, is and ever has been the centre of gravity in a realm, to which all other things must and will accommodate themselves."²

Coleridge is equally certain that this does not necessarily imply or require two functionaries, although the National Church has this double function. "Nay," he writes, "the perfection of each may require the union of both in one."³

Two things further must be noted regarding the National Church. First, its head is the King. The King is "Head of the National Church, or Clerisy, and the Protector and Supreme Trustee of the NATIONALITY."⁴ He is bound by his coronation oath to protect "the safety and independence of the National Church."⁵ Second, as the National Church derives its support from the nationality, the clerisy must be "fully and exclusively citizens of the State, neither acknowledging the authority, nor within the influence of any other State in

1. Church and State, p.75.

2. Ibid: p.82.

3. Ibid: p.69.

4. Ibid: p.103.

5. Ibid: p.135.

the world....owning (no) other earthly sovereign or visible head but the king."¹ It is on this ground that Coleridge argues that the Roman Catholic clergy have no right to a share in the nationality. Their allegiance to the Pope constitutes their first disqualification. A second disqualification is their celibacy. Under the command and authority of the Pope they have abjured "that bond, which more than all other ties connects the citizen with his country; which beyond all other securities affords the surest pledge to the state for the fealty of its citizens."² The arguments need not detain us. Regarded from the standpoint of Coleridge's idea of the National Church, they are perfectly sound.³

V. The Christian Church.

In contrast to the National Church, the third great estate of the realm, stands the Christian Church. It is distinguished by four characters.⁴ First,⁵ the Christian Church is not a kingdom, realm or state of the world, nor an estate of such. It is, in fact, opposed to earthly states collectively by its other-worldly character. It is "the sustaining, correcting, befriending Opposite of the world." Its

"paramount aim and object, indeed, is another world, not a world to come exclusively, but likewise another world that now is: and to the concerns of which alone the epithet spiritual can, without mischievous abuse of the word, be applied."

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1. Church and State, p.94.
 2. Ibid, pp.95-96. Cf. Table Talk, p.213.
 3. Cf. further Church and State, pp.169-186.
 4. Coleridge devotes a whole section to this subject. Church and State, pp.145-166.
 5. Ibid: pp.146-149.

Moreover the Christian Church cannot be opposed to any particular state "without forfeiting the name of Christian."¹

As the Christian Church, it has no nationality entrusted to it. Therefore, it cannot be considered a counterbalance within the state to "the collective heritage."²

Second,³ the Christian Church is not a secret community. Although it is the ecclesia proper, "the communion of such as are called out of the world,"⁴ it is nevertheless "most observable." It is an institution, "consisting of visible and public communities." It is objective both in nature and purpose; that is to say, not "like reason and the court of conscience, existing only in and for the individual."

Its visibility, its publicity, constitutes its second character.

Third,⁵ the Christian Church is characterized by the absence or non-existence of "any local or personal centre of unity, of any single source of universal power."⁶ This third character reconciles the first two and gives "the condition under which their co-existence in the same subject becomes possible."⁷ Authority in the Christian Church derives "immediately from Christ." Coleridge quotes the New Testament verse, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name,

1. Church and State, p.150.

2. Ibid: p.150.

3. Ibid: p.149.

4. Ibid: p.52.

5. Ibid: pp.149-160.

6. Ibid: p.151.

7. Ibid: p.149.

there am I in the midst of them,"¹ as indicative of the true nature of the Christian Church. Unity of the particular visible churches is thus both actual and ideal; the latter term meaning "mystic and supersensual."²

Fourth,³ the Christian Church is catholic or universal. This is the necessary consequence of the first and third characters. It is "neither Anglican, Gallican, nor Roman, neither Latin nor Greek."⁴ The Church universal is spiritually perfect in every true Church. On this basis, Coleridge objects to the designation "Catholic and Apostolic Church of England." "The true Church of England is the National Church, or Clerisy."⁵ He suggests, and prefers, the designation "the Catholic Church under Christ throughout Great Britain and Ireland."

Coleridge does not develop a complete doctrine of the Christian Church in Church and State.⁶ For his purpose at this point such a development is not necessary. What is of import is the relation between the National Church and the Christian Church as outlined in antithesis.

1. Matt. XVIII. 20.

2. Church and State, pp.154-155.

3. Ibid: pp.160-166.

4. Cf. Table Talk, pp.29-30, where Coleridge holds that the term Roman Catholic is an anomaly. "Catholicism is not capable of degrees or local apportionments."

5. Church and State, p.161.

6. See Appendix E. for a fuller discussion of the Christian Church.

VI. Relation of the Christian Church to the National Church.

Religion, it must be borne in mind, is not "the essential constitutive end" of the National Church, although it must be considered an "indispensable ally."¹ Many grievous practical errors and much unchristian intolerance have ensued from a confusion of the Christian and the National Churches.²

The term church is, in fact, unfortunate when applied to the clerisy. "It is at least an inconvenience in our language, that the term Church, instead of being confined to its proper sense.....the ecclesia....(should be) likewise... our term for the clerical establishment."³ The name, "in its best sense," is exclusively appropriate to the Church of Christ.⁴ In contrast to the ecclesia of the Christian Church, Coleridge suggests enclesia for the National Church, "an order of men, chosen in and of the realm."⁵

But this aside, the relation of the one Church to the other is of some concern. Coleridge puts it thus:

"In relation to the National Church, Christianity, or the Church of Christ, is a blessed accident, a providential boon, a grace of God, a mighty and faithful friend, envoy indeed and liege subject of another state, which can neither administer the laws nor promote the ends of

1. Church and State, p.52.

2. Ibid; p.165. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.3.

3. Ibid: p.161.

4. Ibid: p.52.

5. Ibid: p.52.

this other State, which is not of the world, without advantage, direct and indirect, to the true interests of the States, the aggregate of which is what we mean by the WORLD." 1

Elsewhere, Coleridge emphasizes the necessity of distinguishing between the two churches, while at the same time maintaining their inter-relation.

"This is no Theory — to be superseded by another, as soon as a new fact or two is discovered, which had escaped the attention of Theorist the first. It is either a Principle on which all must be grounded: or it is a Falsehood. No third is possible! But that a National Church may include a Christian Church, I more than admit." 2

By maintaining its other-worldly character, the Christian Church becomes "the sustaining, correcting, befriending Opposite of the world." 3 In the act of laying its own foundations the Christian Church "completes and strengthens the edifice of the state, without interference or commixture." 4 For these services the Christian Church receives neither wages nor honours. "She asks only protection, and to be let alone." 5

1. Church and State, p.67. Cf. Table Talk, p.286, Note of May 31, 1834, where the opposite position is taken. "The National Church requires, and is required by, the Christian Church for the perfection of each. For if there were no national Church, the mere spiritual Church would either become, like the Papacy, a dreadful tyranny over mind and body;—or else would fall abroad into a multitude of enthusiastic sects, as in England in the seventeenth century, It is my deep conviction that, in a country of any religion at all, liberty of conscience can only be permanently preserved by means and under the shadow of a national Church,—a political establishment connected with, but distinct from, the Spiritual Church."
2. Note on p.23 Blomfield: A Charge delivered to the Clergy of his Diocese. British Museum Copy.
3. Church and State, p.147.
4. Ibid: p.148.
5. Ibid: p.149.

She asks nothing for members as Christians, "which they are not already entitled to demand as citizens and subjects."¹

VII. Some Practical Conclusions.

We have seen on what grounds Coleridge excludes the Roman Catholic clergy from participation in the nationality. In the light of the distinction drawn between the Christian and the National Churches, the grounds on which Coleridge defends the Anglican claim for endowment become equally clear. It is only as the National, not as the Christian Church, that the claim can be established. The nationality had been created as a perpetual trust for the maintenance of the clerisy. It cannot be alienated from its original purposes without foul wrong to the nation.² This does not mean that the proceeds from the nationality are to be vested only in the established clergy.³ Indeed, he suggests universities, parsons and schoolmasters as worthy recipients.⁴ On Coleridge's own grounds, it would seem that the so-called Free Churches should receive also from the nationality, discharging as they do the functions of a national church. Actually, the Church of England possesses the endowment. Coleridge comes to the rescue of his case for Anglican Establishment by asserting that earlier secessions from the clerisy—in this case, lawyers and doctors,—

1. Church and State, p.149.

2. Ibid: p.60.

3. Ibid: p.59.

4. Ibid: p.63.

"can in no way affect the principle, nor alter the tenure, nor annul the rights of those who remained."¹ This may be cited as an example of the conflict of the philosophic and historical in Coleridge. His National Church had little connection with the Established Church of the period.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that the Liberals of Coleridge's day were bent on separating the Christian and the National Churches, while the Tories went to the opposite extreme of defending the Establishment on the grounds of property rights or of sacerdotal character. Coleridge goes on different principles. He is anxious to point out the error of confounding the functions of the National Church.²

Coleridge's opposition to the Catholic Emancipation Act was not based on opposition to the principle of emancipation, but because it was, to Coleridge, a sop "to tranquilize Ireland."³ He held that any such bill must be based on principles not derived from theology,⁴ but on grounds "derived and inherited from our ancestors before the Reformation."⁵ Such a bill he would support. With this, Coleridge concludes the argument of Church and State. We can see how far removed he was from the heats and passions engendered by the bill.

1. Church and State, p.59.

2. Ibid: pp.69-70, Cf. ibid: pp.74. Cf. Table Talk, pp. 11, 67, 149, 286.

3. Church and State, p.197.

4. Ibid: p.200.

5. Ibid: p.203.

Looking back over Coleridge's theory of Church and State, one is impressed by his clear grasp of the truth that social health is religiously conditioned. From this standpoint Hort regarded Church and State as Coleridge's most important work.¹ Hort saw in it a guiding practical principle:- "the distinctness and mutual necessity of law and religion, the forbidding, correcting, restraining power, and the guiding, informing, inspiring power." The application of such a principle in all the changing conditions of human life and society Hort considered one of the chief problems of the nineteenth century. It still remains, it may well be added, one of the chief problems of the twentieth century.

Again, one is forced to admire the magnificence of Coleridge's conception of the National Church. Coleridge's theory differs both from the semi-Erastian theory of Hooker, and the alliance theory of Warburton. By his distinction between the Christian and the National Churches, Coleridge was able to preserve the idea of the Christian Church intact as a spiritual reality; and, at the same time, to recall the National Church to her heritage as the mother of the arts, of philosophy and of learning, as well as of faith and of piety. In one sense, then, Coleridge may be said to be a fore-runner

1. Cambridge Essays, pp.348-349. Tulloch: op.cit., p.31, regards the work as one of the least satisfactory from the literary standpoint.

of the Oxford Movement. As a complete working theory, however, the scheme suffered from lack of contact with the contemporary Established Church. In this respect, Church and State may be said to have failed to achieve the original purpose of its author.

On the other hand, the work was not without influence. Gladstone paid tribute to it in his own book, The State in its Relations with the Church, as a "masterly sketch," "alike beautiful and profound."¹ Together with Palmer's Treatise on the Church of Christ, Coleridge's Church and State stands behind Gladstone's book as the dominating influence. It is, as Morley notes,² and Hope-Scott testifies,³ the mainspring of Gladstone's contribution. Thus, Coleridge may be said to stand between Burke and Gladstone as a connecting link.

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1. Gladstone: The State in its Relations with the Church, pp.17, 19.
 2. Morley: Life of William Ewart Gladstone, I. p.123.
 3. Memoirs of Hope-Scott, 1884, I. p.176. Letter of March 1st, 1839. Quoted in E.R.E.
Cf. Hetherington: Coleridge and his Followers, p.36.

CHAPTER XI.

Christianity and the Scriptures.

1. Introduction.

Nothing illustrates more clearly Coleridge's fine sense of religious reality than his work on the doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures. At the same time this work reveals his deep interest in the Christian faith. An outline of his work in this connection is therefore of real interest in this study of his religious philosophy. Moreover, his work in this field is of great historical significance. It is necessary therefore to indicate briefly the nature of the problem that confronted him.

The view of the Scriptures prevailing in Coleridge's day postulated a book, dictated in its entirety by an Infallible Intelligence, and therefore infallible and inerrant in its original form. The Bible thus conceived was the Word of God. Whatever was contained in the Bible was revealed of God. This position assumed the importance of an article of belief.¹

1. Vide Storr: op.cit., pp.178-180, for a treatment of this point.

But forces were already at work to undermine this theory.¹ In Germany, Herder and Lessing, as the creators of the historical method, together with Niebuhr and Savigny, had prepared the way for its application to the special subject-matter of the Scriptures. This work was taken up by Eichhorn, Gieseler, Griesbach, Schleiermacher, Semler, De Wette, Gesenius, Ewald and Ilgen. The climax of the critical movement was reached in 1835 with the publication of Strauss' Leben Jesu, Vatke's Biblical Theology, and Baur's Über die sogenannten Pastoral-briefe. In Britain, men were also astir in the same direction.² There was the Roman Catholic Geddes in Scotland, and the Anglican Bishop Marsh in England—the latter the first in Britain to raise clearly the Synoptic Problem; there was Thirlwall with his introduction to his translation of Schleiermacher's Essay on St. Luke in 1825; there was Thirlwall's friend and Coleridge's friend, Julius Hare, who, with Thirlwall, translated Niebuhr's History of Rome in 1827; there was Henry Hart Milman with his History of the Jews in 1829; and there was the Oriel School of Whateley, Arnold and Hampden. But among these pioneers, Coleridge's place is unique. To him, as Principal Tulloch points out, "belongs the honour of having first plainly and boldly announced that the Scriptures were to be read and

1. Vide Storr: op.cit., pp.160-176 for the material of the following.

2. Vide Ibid, pp.177-198; and Tulloch: op.cit., pp.40-85.

studied, like any other literature, in the light of their continuous growth, and the adaptation of their parts to one another."¹

II. Coleridge as a Critical Scholar.

In 1927, the French scholar, Nidecker, suggested that an exposition of Coleridge's critical views on the matter of the Scriptures was a desideratum in Coleridgean criticism.² Since then, no such exposition has appeared. To attempt here a complete exposition is obviously impossible. It is of value, however, to indicate something of Coleridge's work in this field, for it lies at the foundation of his general theory.

Coleridge owed his first introduction to Biblical criticism to Eichhorn. This introduction occurred during his visit to Göttingen; and to the end of his life,³ Coleridge retained his interest in Eichhorn. From Lessing, whose works he read thoroughly while in Germany, Coleridge obtained certain phrases, notably the term Bibliolatry, for his Confessions.⁴ Benn has argued, in the light of this, that Coleridge's whole stock of Biblical criticism was drawn from these two sources.⁵

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1. Tulloch: op.cit., p.25. Cf. Shairp: Studies in Poetry and Philosophy, p.233.
 2. Revue de littérature comparée, VII. p.528.
 3. Vide Haney: A Bibliography of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
 4. Vide Introduction by J.H.Green to the 1849 edition of the Confessions for the parallel passages in Lessing and Coleridge.
 5. Benn: op.cit., p.271.

The evidence, however, indicates a wider range of reading. The names of Schleiermacher, Heinrichs, Jahn¹, appear in the bibliographies of Coleridge. In addition, Paulus² of Jena and Semler³ are singled out for comment.

A note in the Semina Rerum indicates his interest in the Synoptic Problem. The occasion of the note, dated February 8th, 1826, is the perusal of Schleiermacher's Essay on St. Luke, which had appeared in an English translation the previous year.⁴ The translator, Thirlwall, had included an introduction giving an account of the counter-theories of Eichhorn and Schleiermacher, together with a discussion of the controversial works from Eichhorn down to Bishop Marsh in England. This interest in the Synoptic Problem reveals that Coleridge was alive to the vital questions of criticism of his day.

Coleridge had little use for the ordinary commentary. He had, however, two favourites among the older commentators. The one was Cocceius,⁵ the other was Leighton, whose Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Peter he ranked next to the Scriptures themselves.⁶

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1. J.D.Campbell offers the comment that Jahn's History of the Hebrew Commonwealth was "probably the main source of the frequent illustrations which he drew from the idea and development of the Hebrew Commonwealth." The Athanaeum, 1888, I. p.795.
 2. Notes on English Divines, II. p.324.
 3. MS. C, p.51.
 4. MS.C, p.52. Cf. Letters, II. pp.707-708.-May 25, 1820.
 5. Table Talk, p.69. Cf. Unpublished Letters, II. pp.401-402.
 6. Omniana, p.400.

Coleridge's main interest centred in the New Testament. But, unlike Marcion and Schleiermacher, he would not divorce the Old Testament from the New. He learned Hebrew in order that he might read the Old Testament in the original,¹ and attained sufficient knowledge to satisfy himself on certain critical points. One result of this was that he was able to appreciate the difference in the Hebrew of such books as Isaiah, Ecclesiastes and Daniel.² He accepts the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch,³ but does not interpret the books literally. The first chapters of Genesis are to be interpreted symbolically.⁴ The history of Adam is a mythos.⁵ The question of cosmic creation does not interest him. Will is always creative.⁶ In another instance Coleridge avoids the danger of literalism by an appeal to allegory. "I have learned to interpret for myself the imprecatory verses of the Psalms of my inward and spiritual enemies," he writes in a note.⁷

The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are historical figures. They are not sacrosanct; their strengths and weaknesses are judged impartially.⁸ Coleridge has an

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1. Cf. Israel's Lament, Poems, pp.433-434. Cf. Table Talk, p.86n.
 2. Table Talk, p.41.
 3. Table Talk, p.81.
 4. Aids, p.173n.
 5. Notes on English Divines, I. p.267.
 6. Cf. ibid, II. p.142.
 7. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, p.51.
 8. Table Talk, pp.76-77.

ingenious interpretation of the Witch of Endor story as "a trick of Ventriloquism."¹ The Book of Job is held to be pure Arab poetry of the highest and most antique cast, antecedent to the Mosaic dispensation.² He recognizes that the Satan of the Book of Job is not the devil of mediaeval theology. Coleridge characterizes him as a "dramatic attorney-general."³ The Psalms are Davidical rather than David's own compositions.⁴ The question of pre- or post-exilic Psalms apparently does not occur to him, although he expresses a wish for a fresh translation of the Psalms, inasmuch as "scores of passages are utterly incoherent as they stand."⁵ In like manner the Book of Proverbs is Solomonian.⁶ Along with Ecclesiastes, the book was probably written or collected about the time of Nehemiah.⁷

The Book of Jonah he holds to be an apologue or parable in which Jonah means the Israelitish nation.⁸ The Book of Daniel aroused his interest for several reasons. In the first place, the critical questions involved made the book a kind of test case. Secondly, the whole question of prophecy came immediately to the fore. With regard to the second point, there is some evidence to indicate that, although Coleridge did not recognize the so-called proof from prophecy

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1. Table Talk, p.36. Cf. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, p.52.
 2. Ibid: pp.72,85.
 3. Ibid: p.86.
 4. Ibid: p.41.
 5. Ibid: p.86.
 6. Ibid: p.41.
 7. Ibid: p.174.
 8. Aids, p.174n. Cf. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, p.48.

as valid for Christianity, yet he did not rule out the possibility of prediction. His interest in the psychology of prophecy is seen in the Appendix to the Statesman's Manual,¹ and in the Table Talk. A note in the Table Talk reads:-

"It is impossible to say whether an inner sense does not really exist in the mind, seldom developed, indeed, but which may have a power of presentiment.....The power of prophecy might have been merely a spiritual excitation of this dormant faculty."²

The place of music in this connection is noted. Coleridge discusses the association of music with prophecy in the Old Testament.³ Elsewhere he holds that "if the prophecies of the Old Testament are not rightly interpreted of Jesus our Christ, then there is no prediction whatever contained in it of that stupendous event—the rise and establishment of Christianity."⁴ His interest in the spiritual aspects of prophecy is seen by his insistence—whether exegetically correct or not is beside the present point—that, with the exception of the Book of Daniel and "an obscure text of Jeremiah," "there is not a passage in all the Old Testament which favours the notion of a temporal Messiah."⁵

Coleridge grasps clearly one aspect of the meaning of prophecy, namely, that prophecy is concerned with social conditions and moral relations rather than with events.

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1. Appendix to the Statesman's Manual, Biog. Lit. p.348.
 2. Table Talk, p.31.
 3. Ibid, p.31.
 4. Table Talk, pp.57-58.
 5. Ibid, pp.57-58.

Thus he finds in Isaiah "the true philosophy of the French Revolution,"¹ at the same time denying that prophecy is to be applied to particular events.

"To the man who has habitually contemplated Christianity as interesting all rational finite beings, as the very spirit of truth, the application of the prophecies as so many fortune-tellings and sooth-sayings to particular events and persons, must needs be felt as childish."²

A long note in the Semina Rerum³ reveals his mind on the critical questions of the Book of Daniel. He holds the book to consist of two parts, a biographical preface and the prophecies beginning at Chapter VII. The biographical section is a late work, proved by the language "which could not have been in use till after the conquests of Alexander the Great." It belongs to the same group as Susannah and the Elders, and Bel and the Dragon. And, elsewhere, he states explicitly that this section dates from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.⁴ He holds that this does not affect the historicity of a person called Daniel, contemporary with Ezekiel. The biographical section contains nothing "that can interest us as Christians." In fact, these half-dozen chapters contain "more temptations to disbelief, more and more *prima facie* improbabilities than all the rest of the Old Testament collectively." Coleridge does not extend his criticism to the rest of the book and his belief in the possibility of prediction allows him to date the latter half from the time of the Exile.⁵ In

1. Statesman's Manual, Biog. Lit. p.325. Quotes Isaiah 47⁷⁻¹³.

2. Notes on English Divines, I. p.130. Cf. *ibid*, II. p.329.

3. MS.C, pp.22-25.

4. Jahn: History of the Hebrew Commonwealth, note printed in The Athenaeum, 1888, I. p.796.

5. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.132; II. p.333.

this, Coleridge as a critic of the Old Testament stands revealed—partially equipped, and leaning to the new critical positions; half-hesitant, and retaining the old. He was as much a creature of the age, in this respect, as he was in advance of it.

The heart of Coleridge's interest lay, however, in the New Testament. It is to be expected that his critical views would display more firmness and would cover a wider range. This is found to be the case. His interest in the Synoptic Problem has been indicated. Although there is no direct exposition of his own views extant, a note on a sermon of Bishop Hacket indicates that he had adopted Eichhorn's theory in general.

"As the Temptation is found in the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, it must have formed part of the Prot-evangelion, or original Gospel;—from the Apostles, therefore, it must have come, and from some or all who had heard the account from our Lord himself."¹

Elsewhere, he writes of the "nominal Matthew."² Again, he suggests,

"It would lessen, if not remove,.....not a few difficulties in the three first Gospels, if we might venture to suppose that in some instances the Evangelists (for I cannot forget that the explaining the words according to St. Matthew as equivalent to written by Matthew, is a purely arbitrary interpretation, and highly improbable, to boot) had misconceived the Apostles, or the Apostles whose preaching, κηρύγματα they had collected (taken notes of, as we now say) have not comprehended their divine Master."³

1. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.147-148.

2. MS.C, note at end.

3. MS.C, pp.95-96. (Edited)

In line with this, he holds Matthew XII. v.40 to be a gloss of some "unlearned, though pious, Christian of the first century."¹ His handling of this text reveals some insight into the nature of internal evidence in connection with discrepancies between the Gospels. A final note on the problem is of interest:-

"I must lose all power of distinction, before I can affirm that the genuineness of the first Gospel, that in its present form it was written by Matthew, or is a literal translation of a Gospel written by him, rests on as strong external evidence as Luke's, or on as strong internal evidence as St. John's."²

These quotations illustrate the trend of his mind on the problem. There is not sufficient evidence to suggest that he had a complete theory of the Synoptic Problem, or rather—for it is almost certain that he had some theory, as he had of everything else—there is no record of what his exact theory really was.

He gives 120 A.D. as the outside date for all the New Testament writings,³ although he does not feel himself that any were written that late. He recognizes the ending of St. Mark's Gospel to be later than the rest of the book.⁴ He confesses ignorance as to the "when, why, and for whom" of his favourite Gospel of St. John.⁵ He argues that the object of

1. Statesman's Manual, Appendix B. Biog. Lit. pp.337-338.

2. Notes on English Divines, II. p.237.

3. Confessions, p.293.

4. Notes on English Divines, I. p.26.

5. Ibid: I. p.290 Nor is his favourite sacrosanct.

I. John V.7 is held to be a gloss.

Cf. Table Talk, p.23; and Notes on English Divines, II.p.207.

St. John in his Gospel and his Epistles is to prove: first, the divinity; and second, the actual human nature and bodily suffering of Christ.¹

The authenticity of St. Paul's Epistles is incomparably clearer than that of the Synoptics.² An exception is made in the case of the Pastoral Epistles,³ which he is inclined to ascribe to a disciple of St. Paul, rather than to the Apostle himself. The arguments as to unpaulinity he rejects as unsound. Elsewhere he calls these Epistles ἐπιστολαὶ παυλικαὶς and remarks on the difference in style between them and the Epistle to the Romans.⁴ The reasons he cites for ascribing the Epistles to a disciple of St. Paul are certain biographical and chronological difficulties and the absence of the books from Marcion's Apostolicon. On the basis of this theory, difficulties in connection with the history of the early church would be cleared,—since "it does not seem quite probable" that the prohibition of remarriage to deaconesses, the separation of the Elders from the Deacons and the Bishop from the Elders, occurred as early as the accepted dates—65 for II Timothy, 55 for Titus.

The Epistle to the Romans is to Coleridge "the most profound work in existence."⁵ Ephesians is a Catholic

1. Table Talk, p.23.

2. Notes on English Divines, II. p.291

3. MS. C, pp.45-46.

4. Table Talk, p.228.

5. Table Talk, p.228. Coleridge has an interesting remark to the effect that, were St. Paul writing today, he would have cast his parentheses into notes.

Epistle addressed to the whole of St. Paul's churches. It is "one of the divinest compositions of man," and embraces every doctrine of Christianity.¹ Colossians is "the overflowing, as it were," of St. Paul's mind on the same subject as Ephesians.²

Again, Coleridge holds that there are serious difficulties affecting the authenticity of the Petrine Epistles.³ He ascribes them to the Apostolic Age, suggesting as a solution that St. Peter, "no great scholar or grammarian," had dictated them to an amanuensis, leaving diction and style to him. This amanuensis had been an auditor of St. Paul and Coleridge suggests either Luke or Mark as probabilities. The references to the Day of the Lord in the Petrine Epistles present a difficulty to Coleridge's mind. "Are we bound to receive them as articles of faith?"⁴ Elsewhere he asks whether such passages are to be regarded as apocalyptic and a part of the revelation of Christ, or are they, "like the dogma of a personal Satan, accommodations of the current popular creed which they continued to believe."⁵

The Epistle to the Hebrews is ascribed to Apollos, following the lead of Luther.⁶ This is a private opinion only,

1. Table Talk, p.83.

2. Ibid: p.83.

3. Notes on English Divines, II. p.344; I. p.201.

4. Ibid; II. p.344.

5. Ibid: I. p.318.

6. Ibid: I. p.201.

asserted against the popular ascription of the book to St. Paul. "And what," he asks, "though it was written by neither?" He holds it demonstrable that the book was composed before the siege of Jerusalem, and that the internal evidence indicates an Alexandrian origin. The doctrine of the Book is Pauline "at large."

The Book of Revelation, with its bizarre symbolism, appealed greatly to Coleridge's poetic imagination. His interest is seen in his marginal notes on the commentaries of Eichhorn¹ and Heinrichs,² and in his frequent references to Cocceius. Coleridge declines to find in the book any reference to Pope, Turk or Napoleon, as against the extravagant claims of his friend, Edward Irving.³ He describes the book as a "sacred Oratorio," a "drama sui generis."⁴ At one time in his life, he characteristically suggests a metrical translation of the Apocalypse.⁵ Following the lead of Eusebius, he is inclined to find the author in John, "an Elder and Contemporary of the Church of Ephesus."⁶

Coleridge has a true conception of New Testament eschatology.

"If any one contends that the kingdom of the Son of Man, and the re-descent of our Lord with his angels in the

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1. Ottery St. Mary Marginalia II.
 2. Notes on English Divines, I. p.137 seq.
 3. British Museum MS., Egerton 2801, folio 204.
 4. Ibid, folio 205.
 5. Letters, II. p.773.
 6. British Museum MS., Egerton 2801, folio 205.
Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp. 131-132.

clouds, are to be interpreted spiritually, I have no objection; only you cannot pretend that this was the interpretation of the disciples. It may be the right, but it was not the Apostolic belief."¹

Several instances of Coleridge's views on the question of New Testament miracles may be given. The true miracle at Pentecost consisted in the descent of the Holy Spirit. The so-called gift of tongues is wholly secondary, and need not be ascribed to miraculous sources.² The Virgin Birth of Christ is not a "point of religion" with Coleridge,—"it is enough for me to know that the Son of God became flesh."³ The conversion of St. Paul supplies Coleridge with a test case. A long note in the Semina Rerum indicates his distinction between the recorded details and the essential truth of the narrative.⁴ He does not expect to find in Luke a "scrutinizing philosophic historian," who has cross-examined every authority and witness. Luke thought more of spiritual edification than mere historical precision. Coleridge launches a fundamental criticism at the work of the "Neological School from Semler to Schleiermacher."

"The original sin of the German School is the comparing of this or that extraordinary narrative in the Gospel with some other analogous fact in recent or profane History, instead of taking the complexus of the New Testament Story and seeking for an analogy to this, in any other series of events allowed not to be miraculous. In imagination, they snap each single Hair, with ease;.... No! You must try your strength on the Whole Tail."

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1. Notes on English Divines, I. p.271.
 2. Ibid: I. p.37.
 3. Ibid: I. pp.73-74.
 4. MS. C, pp.50-51.

Elsewhere,¹ he stresses the same point:

"Now on this last point.....viz. the object, the occasion, the importance, the results, St. Paul himself, the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the enduring Oracle of the pure Faith, I should rest my vindication of the miraculous character of the Incident.....I should begin by protesting against the fallacy and unfairness of detaching any single part from the Gospel History, and reasoning on it as if it stood alone.....The credibility of the Gospel Facts—each must be appreciated by the credibility of the Whole."

The question therefore is not whether the conversion of St. Paul may not "be explained by an accidental concurrence of natural causes, supposing it an insulated fact." Rather, the right question is:-

"Bearing in mind the time, the occasion, the results, the life and character of the Individual, and the close and organic connection of this Event with the whole History of Christianity, from the Baptism of John to the close of the Apostolic Age, and again the no less intimate connection of Christianity with the History, Laws and Prophecies of the Hebrew Nation, can we rationally refuse our assent to the Apostle's own inward Assurance and persistent assertion of its' miraculous—i.e. supernatural origin?"²

Such statements reveal not only the literary critic, but the Christian critic, thoroughly alive to the nature of the New Testament problem. At a time when Biblical criticism was a closed book to the vast majority of Christian leaders in England, Coleridge was reaching out a welcome hand to the new learning. It was the welcome, not of an ardent young disciple eager to believe all, but the welcome of a fellow-scholar, ready to point out flaws in any extreme theory. His main concern was the general principles to be borne in mind.

1. MS. C, pp. 94-95.

2. Ibid: p.95.

Foremost among these principles was that criticism, granted full liberty to pursue its literary researches, must remember also the nature of the Christian revelation. This is put strikingly in his remark, "The only fit commentator on Paul was Luther."¹

III. The Doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

Aside from any particular critical problem, there was another question that claimed Coleridge's attention,—that of revelation in relation to the Scriptures. The prevailing view of the Bible affronted not only Coleridge's fine literary sense, it was in direct opposition to his conception of the nature of spirituality, of faith, and of Christianity. The problem, therefore, of the inspiration of the Scriptures was one to the consideration of which he was logically driven.

Coleridge faced the problem squarely, his conclusions finding expression in the Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit. The Confessions takes the form of seven letters addressed to a friend. Coleridge proposes to discuss two questions: first, whether a belief in the divine origin and authority of all and every part of the canonical Scriptures is necessary as the first principle or condition of the Christian faith; and second, whether the true appreciation of Scripture may not be the result and consequence of the belief in Christ.²

1. Table Talk, p.229.

2. Confessions, p.289.

Mention is made in the Semina Rerum of an eighth and of a ninth letter,¹ but no trace is to be found of these extra letters. Their probable contents are, however, indicated. As they stand, the Confessions comprises one of the few complete and homogeneous works of the "myriad-minded" Coleridge. The Confessions, written probably in 1824,² was not published until 1840, after the author's death. The reason for this delay in publication is given by Coleridge in a note in the Semina Rerum. As has been seen, Coleridge was sufficiently acquainted with the results and conclusions of German criticism to sense, like Arnold, the impending shock to the English religious mind. The letters were Coleridge's attempt to lessen this shock.

"I had long foreseen," he writes, "that this Disclosure must take place; and that no Cordon Sanitaire could exclude the infection; and from this conviction I wrote the 8 letters on the religious and superstitious veneration of the Scriptures, in the hope of preparing the minds of theological Students for the discussion by shewing that, whatever the final result might be, the truth of Christianity stood on foundations of Adamant, and that this conviction, emancipating the believer from the Spirit of fear, would tend to render the result itself, in no point of real and practical importance, different from the common Belief on the Subject actually entertained by any man of Learning, in the Church during the last half-century. Anxious, however, that the momentous Truths and vindication of the Mysteries of our Faith from unscriptural perversions and distortions set forth in the Aids to Reflection should have fair play, I suspended the publication of the Letters—and do not, on the whole, regret it."³

1. MS.C, p.47.

2. Campbell: op.cit., p.254n. Cf. Watson: op.cit., p.100.

3. MS.C, p.52. Cf. Watson: op.cit., p.102.

Turning to the Confessions, it is at once evident that Coleridge not only states his own views, but lays bare the weaknesses of the popular theory. That is to say, there is both a negative and a positive side to the question.¹ Attacking the theory of verbal inspiration, Coleridge inquires, first, on what authority the doctrine rests. The Biblical writers give no indication of being merely stenographers, but refer to other documents. Further, the attempt to prove Scriptural infallibility by an appeal to Scripture itself involves a petitio principii.²

Again, the theory of infallibility turns the Bible into one plane of revelation. "In infallibility there are no degrees."³ But the prima facie evidence is that there is a difference in style and content. The doctrine of infallibility thus blurs the distinction between "Law, and Truth, and Example, Oracle and lovely Hymn, and choral Song of ten thousand and thousands, and accepted prayers of Saints and Prophets."⁴ The doctrine allows of no distinction between what is historical fact and what is traditional and legendary,⁵ and does not account for discrepancies of detail.⁶ The books of Esther and

1. It is possible also to amplify the argument of the Confessions by notes and ex officio jottings. In order to avoid repetition, it has been considered advisable to adduce certain other material at the relevant points.

2. Confessions, pp.297-298.

3. Ibid, p.298.

4. Ibid: p.302.

5. Ibid: p.310.

6. Ibid: p.309.

of Daniel assume the same importance as the Gospels and Epistles.¹ The theory thus means that proved inaccuracy in the historical parts would vitiate the Gospels and Epistles as vehicles of truth.²

The doctrine of verbal inspiration gives no answer to the question involved in the facts of diverse languages, and of language itself. "For how can absolute infallibility be blended with fallibility? Where is the infallible criterion? How can infallible truth be infallibly conveyed in defective and fallible expressions?"³ Further, it ignores the fact of figurative and symbolical language, and leads to literalism on the one hand and forced and fantastic interpretations and arbitrary allegories on the other.⁴

The dictation theory makes nonsense of the story and song of Deborah,⁵ of the Book of Job,⁶ and of such Psalms as the 109th and 137th.⁷ Such a theory results in the practice of bringing into logical dependency "detached sentences from books composed at the distance of centuries."⁸ By this practice of wrenching texts from their contexts and elevating the resulting mosaic into independent theses, purgatory, popery, the Inquisition and other monstrous abuses have found Scriptural sanction.⁹

1. Confessions, p.330.

2. Ibid: p.330.

3. Ibid: p.299.

4. Ibid: p.313.

5. Ibid: pp.306-307.

6. Ibid: pp.307-308.

7. Ibid: p.302.

8. Ibid: p.313.

9. Ibid: p.313.

A further difficulty is presented to the theory of infallibility by the facts of science.

"I challenge these divines and their adherents to establish the compatibility of a belief in the modern astronomy and natural philosophy with their and Wesley's doctrine respecting the inspired Scriptures, without reducing the Doctrine itself to a plaything of wax."¹

Coleridge points out that the doctrine may be traced to the rabbinical worship of the Mosais books. But though the rabbis were careful to distinguish between the Pentateuch and the Hagiographa, the founders of the Christian doctrine had extended their notions and phrases to the Bible throughout.² He, therefore, rejects the doctrine. Such a doctrine, he claims,

"Petrifies at once the whole body of Holy Writ with all its harmonies and symmetrical gradations.....This breathing organism, this glorious panharmonicon, which I had seen stand on its feet as a man, and with a man's voice given to it, the Doctrine in question turns at once into a colossal Memnon's head, a hollow passage for a voice, a voice that mocks the voices of many men, and speaks in their names, and yet is but one voice, and the same;—and no man uttered it and never in a human heart was it conceived."³

Such a doctrine evacuates all sense and efficacy from the fact of the growth of the Bible itself through the centuries.⁴

Turning to the positive aspect, Coleridge admits in the first place, the difficulty involved in the prepossession in favour of the Bible on the part of the average Christian.

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1. Confessions, p.312.
 2. Ibid: pp.299-300.
 3. Ibid: p.305.
 4. Ibid: p.306.

Claims of reverence and gratitude set the Bible apart from all other books.¹ On the other hand, he relates his own experience,

"that the more tranquilly an inquirer takes up the Bible as he would any other body of ancient writings, the livelier and steadier will be his impression of its superiority to all other books.....Difficulty after difficulty has been overcome from the time that I began to study the Scriptures with free and unboding spirit, under the conviction that my faith in the Incarnate Word and his Gospel was secure, whatever the result might be."²

The key to Coleridge's doctrine is to be found in his idea of the Word. "There is a Light higher than all, even the Word that was in the beginning;—the Light, of which light itself is but the shechinah and cloudy tabernacle;—the Word that is light for every man, and life for as many as give heed to it."³ The Word stands back of any written document.

"If between this Word and the written Letter I shall anywhere seem to myself to find a discrepance, I will not conclude that such there actually is; nor on the other hand will I fall under the condemnation of them that would lie for God, but seek as I may, be thankful for what I have and wait."⁴

This distinction between the Eternal Word and the written Scriptures is fundamental. It is emphasized constantly. "Alas!" he writes, "for the superstition where the words are made to be the Spirit! Oh! might I live but to utter all my meditations on this most concerning point."⁵ The Word is above and distinct from the written Scriptures. St. Peter's statement, "The word of the Lord endureth for ever," (I Peter 1,25) provides a

1. Confessions, p.294.

2. Ibid: pp.331-332.

3. Ibid: p.294.

4. Ibid: p.294.

5. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, pp.7-8.

perfect illustration.¹ Elsewhere, he states, "The written words must be tried by the Word from the beginning."²

In a long note in the Semina Rerum dealing with the doctrine and practice of the Reformers his own position becomes clear. His commendation is implicit testimony.

"So that in those parts only, in which the Spirit in the Letter revealed itself to the Spirit in the Heart, were guiding Scriptures for each individual—and nothing more was imposed on him than the duty, which both Humility and Charity dictated, of presuming that all other parts of Scripture might have been for other Christians and might become for himself at some future time and in other moods and states of spiritual insight, the transparent Shrines of the same Spirit of Truth."³

It could not be expressed better.

Returning to the argument of the Confessions, Coleridge holds, that "whatever finds me, bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit."⁴ The Bible in reaching to the inmost shrine of man's being, carries its own evidence of divine origin. Coleridge testifies that

"in the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; that the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and that whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit."⁵

Given the same justice granted to all other books of grave authority, Coleridge is convinced that the Bible will make its own appeal. Like Christianity, it is self-evidencing. This question of the evidences of Scripture is crucial.

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1. Notes on English Divines, II. p.130.
 2. Ibid, I. p.219. Cf. Ibid: I. p.84.
 3. MS.C, p.65.
 4. Confessions, p.295.
 5. Ibid: p.296.

Coleridge is emphatic that "the true evidence of the Bible is the Bible," even as the evidence of Christianity is the "living fact of Christianity itself."¹ "The Bible and Christianity are their own sufficient evidence."²

Although stressing the intrinsic witness of the Bible to its own authority, Coleridge feels that it is legitimate to adduce certain historical evidence.³ The fact of the moral influence of the Bible upon society is a demonstration that stands above particular testimony.⁴

"In every generation, and wherever the light of Revelation has shone, men of all ranks, conditions, and states of mind have found in this Volume a correspondent for every movement toward the Better felt in their own hearts."⁵

"For more than a thousand years the Bible, collectively taken, has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law,—in short, with the moral and intellectual cultivation of the species, always supporting, and often leading the way."⁶

Good and holy men, "the kingly spirits of history," have borne witness to its influences. It is the "most perfect instrument, the only adequate organ, of Humanity;—the organ and instrument of all the gifts, powers, and tendencies, by which the individual is privileged to rise above himself."⁷ Such evidences, historical and external, are not to be considered lightly.

Coleridge finds further proof of the authenticity of the books of the Bible in the selfsame discrepancies which

1. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, p.6.

Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. pp. 201, 350.

2. Confessions, p.300.

3. Ibid: p.319.

4. Ibid: p.319. Statesman's Manual, Biog.Lit. p.323.

5. Ibid: p.324.

6. Ibid: p.325.

7. Ibid: p.325.

he claims are so great a stumbling-block to the theory of verbal inspiration. Such discrepancies form,

"a characteristic mark of the genuineness, independency, and (if I may apply the word to a book) the veraciousness of each several document; a mark, the absence of which would warrant a suspicion of collusion, invention, or at best of servile transcription."¹

Between the two positions, "The Bible contains the religion revealed by God," and "Whatever is contained in the Bible is religion, and was revealed by God," there can be no question to Coleridge's mind.² He is not, however, prepared to draw an arbitrary line between what is and what is not the Word of God. In cases of difficulty he is content to "wait."³ Nor will he draw a line between the Bible and the Church in the propagation of the Christian faith. This forestalls the objection that his own views lead directly to complete individual subjectivism. He points out that as a Christian he cannot stand alone.⁴ He shrinks from all

"question respecting the comparative worth and efficacy of the written Word as weighed against the preaching of the Gospel, the discipline of the Churches, the continued succession of the Ministry, and communion of Saints, lest by comparing I should seem to detach them."⁵

Both Bible and Church take their place in Coleridge's famous Pentad of Operative Christianity, as thesis and antithesis.⁶

1. Confessions, p.309.

2. Ibid: pp.311, 315.

3. Ibid: p.294.

4. Ibid: p.295.

5. Ibid: p.315.

6. Aids, p.288.

There is an interdependence of the Scriptures and the Church, a "co-ordinate authority of the Word, the Spirit and the Church."¹

Coleridge therefore holds that knowledge and belief in the Christian faith should precede study of the Scriptures. To make the Bible, "apart from the truths, doctrines, and spiritual experiences contained therein," a separate article of faith is an abstraction.² There is a divine reciprocity of faith and Scripture. The Scripture, taken in conjunction with the institution and perpetuity of a visible Church, are revered as "the most precious boon of God, next to Christianity itself." In the Scriptures the Christian finds all the revealed truths in addition to examples of faith and disobedience, the lives of men, their affections, emotions and conflicts,— in all of which he recognizes the influence of the Holy Spirit, with a conviction increasing with the growth of his own faith and spiritual experience.³ Coleridge's stress on instruction in the Christian faith, prior to study of the Bible, is understandable in the light of his distinction between the Eternal Word and the written Scriptures. The Scriptures, if they are to be read "to any good and Christian purpose," must be read in the faith which comes from higher sources than history.⁴

1. Notes on English Divines, I. p.308. Cf. ibid: I. p.324.
Cf. Herrmann: Communion of the Christian with God, p.3, where the same point is brought out. Cf. James Moffat: The Context on Theology, The Christian World, - Feb.28, 1935. p.7, where again the interrelation is emphasized.
2. Confessions, p.321.
3. Ibid: pp.321-322.
4. Notes on English Divines, I. p.189.

"O!" he notes in the Semina Rerum, "the gathering storm of sense, the sense of the exceeding importance of the Position, that the Belief and the Study of the Bible ought to be consequent on the Knowledge and Belief of Christianity—and not the ordinary means of acquiring that Knowledge, or of grounding that Belief!"¹

The authority of the Scriptures depends, in one instance, on the unity of the impression it conveys.²

Criticism of a separate passage, for example, the Books of Esther and of Daniel, and the last verse of Psalm 137, does not affect this. This is in line with the criticism launched at the German School. Coleridge points to the case of Shakespeare, whose authority does not depend on critical questions concerning Titus Andronicus or the parts of Henry VI., but on the unity or total impression. The lives of Bacon and of Sir Thomas More afford similar examples. To draw a line between the Bible and Shakespeare, in this respect, is to beg the whole question. "This is the very petitio principii of which I complain."³

Hence the canon of interpretation of the Bible is "that each part of Scripture must be interpreted by the spirit of the whole."⁴ Viewed in this light, a new meaning is attached to infallibility. "It is the spirit of the Bible, and not the detached words and sentences, that is infallible and absolute."⁵ Coleridge asks what knowledge other than practical and spiritual are we entitled to seek in the Bible.⁶

1. MS. C, p.121.

2. Confessions, p.302.

3. Ibid: p.302.

4. Ibid: pp.325-326.

5. Ibid: p.326.

6. Ibid: p.326.

In an unpublished note, he states,

"We may congratulate ourselves on the now universal admission that the Sacred Writings were never intended to supersede Human Industry in the investigation of Nature, or to anticipate the discoveries of Reason by Revelation."¹

And again, he holds:-

"It is a rule of infinite importance that the Scriptures always speak, not ad rem in seipsa, sed quo ad hominem. It is a moral and religious, not a physical, revelation, and in order to render us good moral agents, not accurate natural speculators, to make us know ourselves and our relations to the present and future, not to make us knowing in nature without industry or intellectual exercitation."²

Hence, "the astronomer, the chemist, mineralogist, must go elsewhere; but the Bible is the book for the man."³

Coleridge concludes his argument, in the final letter, by drawing attention to another aspect of his fundamental principle of the Word of God. There is a distinction between revelation by the Eternal Word and actuation by the Holy Spirit. The source of error in the doctrine of verbal inspiration may be traced to an ambiguity in the term inspiration.⁴ This term has a double sense. The first meaning has the sense of "information miraculously communicated by voice or vision."⁵ In the second sense, inspiration means that the writer or speaker "uses and applies his existing gifts of power and knowledge under the predisposing, aiding, and

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1. British Museum MSS., Egerton 2801, folio 201.
 2. Note in Stillingfleet: Origenes Sacrae, p.438. British Museum Copy. Notes edited by Richard Garnett.
 3. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.119-120.
 4. Confessions, p.333.
 5. Ibid: p.333.

directing actuation of God's Holy Spirit.¹ Between these two meanings there is a positive difference. He holds, "It is my profound conviction that St. John and St. Paul were divinely inspired; but I totally disbelieve the dictation of any one word, sentence, or argument throughout their writings."² According to Crabb Robinson, Coleridge extended the category of inspiration to include extra-Biblical writers such as George Fox and certain mystics.³ This was in 1810 and reveals an early interest in the whole question. In one sense, such an extension is logically understandable. On the other hand, Coleridge is ever ready to stress the historic influence of the canonical Scriptures. The Scriptures are not to be believed because affirmed to be inspired.

"They are worthy of belief, because excellent in so universal a sense to ends commensurate with the whole moral, and therefore the whole actual, world, that as sure as there is a moral Governor of the world, they must have been in some sense or other, and that too an efficient sense, inspired."⁴

To return to the argument of the Confessions,—Coleridge characteristically asserts that the Christian Religion has two poles—the objective and the subjective. The one is historic and the other spiritual and individual. Both are necessary. In the Scriptures, "there is proved to us the reciprocity, or reciprocation, of the Spirit as subjective and objective."⁵

1. Confessions, p.333.

2. Table Talk, p.153.

3. Robinson: op.cit., I. p.308.

4. Notes on English Divines, I. p.193.

5. Confessions, p.335.

"No Christian probationer, who is earnestly working out his salvation, and experiences the conflict of the spirit with the evil and the infirmity within him and around him, can find his own state brought before him and, as it were, antedated, in writings reverend even for their antiquity and enduring permanence, and far more, and more abundantly, consecrated by the reverence, love, and grateful testimonies of good men through the long succession of ages,....and not find an objectiveness a confirming and assuring outwardness, and all the main characters of reality, reflected therefrom on the spirit, working in himself and in his own thoughts, emotions, and aspirations."¹

This concludes the argument of the Confessions as it stands.

The object of one of the proposed extra letters—in this case, the ninth—is revealed in an unpublished note.

Coleridge proposed to compare

"the Objective, or philological, and (in the narrower sense of the word) historical handling of Scripture: and the Subjective, and historical in the large and most philosophic sense of History, namely, that which the Scriptures have by divine Providence become, as a mighty Agent, and into which they may be realized subjectively, i.e. in the mind and heart of the Reader and Hearers."²

The material for this chapter is indicated elsewhere in the Semina Rerum.³ Both the objective and the subjective method of treating the Scriptures are necessary. The first is "commendable for all Christians who have the means of so doing, and a duty for the Doctors of the Church." In this method, all the

1. Confessions, p.336.

2. MS.C, p.47.

3. Ibid: p.65. Cf. Herrmann: op.cit., p.x. - "The Holy Scriptures are truly revered when they are, first of all, investigated in their historically determined reality; and when, in the second place, these books are used, just as they offer themselves to us, so that in them we may seek out the revelation of God."
Cf. Herrmann: op.cit., pp.43, 76.

critical methods of rightly interpreting ancient writers are requisite, and these are such that no single age is capable of making final decisions. Each generation hands on its results, to be corrected by the next. But this method is distinct from the other, the use of the Scriptures in devotion and worship.

It remains to consider the reservation to the general theory which has occasioned some comment on the part of later critics.¹ Coleridge is prepared to waive the right to criticism in such cases where the Biblical writer claims to voice the words of God Himself.

"In the books of Moses, and once or twice in the prophecy of Jeremiah, I find it indeed asserted that not only the words were given, but the recording of the same enjoined by the special command of God, and doubtless executed under the special guidance of the Divine Spirit. As to all such passages, therefore, there can be no dispute; and all others in which the words are by the sacred historian declared to have been the Word of the Lord supernaturally communicated, I receive as such with a degree of confidence proportioned to the confidence required of me by the writer himself, and to the claims he himself makes on my belief."²

Such a reservation is all the more puzzling in the light of his idea of the Word of God, and of his grasp of the fact of a progressive growth in the reception of this Word by men.³ His hesitancy may, perhaps, be accounted for as indicating a desire to lessen the shock impending to the religious mind of England. Taken at its face value, it indicates the power

1. Cf. Webb: A Century of Anglican Theology, p.42.

2. Confessions, p.297. Cf. Ibid: p.303.

3. Ibid: p.306.

of traditional belief even over such a mind as free as that of Coleridge.

In conclusion, Coleridge's doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures may be summed up best in the definition which he suggests as a working formula for the Church of his day.

"In all things profitable to our true welfare, the Bible is an infallible Guide for every sincere Inquirer, who reads the Letter by the light of the Spirit for spiritual purposes and with spiritual desires."¹

It is evident that, with the exception of the reservation noted in the Confessions, Coleridge's theory of the Inspiration of the Scriptures is thoroughly modern in tone. It is easily understandable how the Confessions could be ranked among the great formative books of the nineteenth century.² As Archdeacon Storr has said, "The Confessions was the very book to meet the needs of an age which was catching the spirit of historical inquiry, and awaking to larger views of the meaning

1. MS.C, p.65. The formula is given in two other forms:-

1. "The Bible is the sole and sufficient Canon of Christian Faith and Practice because whoever seeks therein with a right spirit that which is requisite for his spiritual welfare and final salvation, will infallibly find what he seeks."
2. "The Bible contains all revealed truths necessary to Salvation and for all men in all times: and every true believer has the promise of God that whatever he seeks in the spirit of Love and filial Trust, the Spirit of Truth will enlighten him to find as far as it is profitable for him."

2. Mather, J. Marshall: The Young Man, Vol. XIII. p.17.
Cf. Great Thoughts, 1899, V. pp. 99-100.

of Revelation.¹ Asserting the spiritual authority of the Bible, it still remains one of the best books on the subject. The treatment on the whole anticipates much that is best in this regard in Herrmann.² Some of Coleridge's statements take rank with the classic utterance of Robertson Smith.³ Finally, in its constant emphasis on the Eternal Word of God, distinct from, yet revealed by and through the Scriptures, it sounds the note familiar in its most recent expression in the teaching of Karl Barth. Of Coleridge's work in this field it is difficult to speak too highly.

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1. Storr: op.cit., p.195. Cf. Sanday: Inspiration, pp.145-155.
 2. Cf. The Communion of the Christian with God.
 3. Vide T. M. Lindsay: Professor Robertson Smith's Doctrine of Scripture, (The Expositor. Fourth Series, Vol.X. 1894, pp.241-264.)
p.250: "If I am asked why I receive Scripture as the Word of God, and as the only perfect rule of faith and life, I answer with all the fathers of the Protestant Church, because the Bible is the only record of the redeeming love of God, because in the Bible alone I find God drawing near to man in Jesus Christ, and declaring to us in Him His will for our salvation. And this record I know to be true by the witness of His Spirit in my heart, whereby I am assured that none other than God himself is able to speak such words to my soul." (from: Answer to the form of Libel, p.21.)

CHAPTER XII.

Conclusion.

I. Influence on Philosophy.

To estimate the value of a man's thought, it is helpful, and at times necessary, to trace the influence of this thought. We have seen that in the case of Coleridge, there are two sides to his thinking. Of his contribution to the technical philosophy of the succeeding generation, there is little to record. Green, Coleridge's disciple, inherited the manuscripts of which he had been the amanuensis. It was not, however, until 1865 that Green published his own Spiritual Philosophy, while Coleridge's own manuscripts remain to this day unedited and unpublished.

Green, however, was only one of the group of admiring disciples who sat at the feet of the "Seer of Highgate." But even through these followers who, like John Sterling, were men of undoubted capacity, Coleridge failed to influence immediately the current of philosophical thought. Muirhead, seeking reasons for this "lag" in influence, finds it: first, "in a certain unripeness of the time for the acceptance by philosophers of these ideas;"¹ and second, in

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.259.

"the innate conservatism, which often prevented Coleridge from following out to the bitter end the principles he had the genius to seize."¹

II. Influence on Theology.

If Coleridge's immediate contribution to technical philosophy may be said to be insignificant, it is otherwise in the field of Christian theology. This fact alone would indicate the importance of this side of Coleridge's thought. "Coleridge," writes Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, "poured a stream of fresh life into English divinity."² In general, this stream found its main channel through the work of the so-called Broad Church School, in its liberalizing tendency and reaction to dogmatic evangelicalism on the one hand and dogmatic ecclesiasticism on the other. In particular, Coleridge's influence may be traced in the members of this school.

A. Some Typical Examples in England.

(a) Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872)

Foremost among these Broad Church thinkers stands Frederick Denison Maurice, noted alike for his Christian Platonism and for his Christian Socialism. Maurice entered Cambridge in 1823, to have Hare for his tutor and Sterling for his friend. He had read Coleridge before he went up,³ and at Cambridge took the opportunity to defend him against the

1. Muirhead: Coleridge as Philosopher, p.259.

2. Mackintosh: The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ, p.275.

3. Maurice: The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice, I, p.176.

prevailing Benthamite criticism. In his early literary efforts at Cambridge, his biographer tells us that "Coleridge alone receives unbounded praise."¹ Although he never met Coleridge, Maurice pays him the tribute of having preserved him from infidelity.² He was deeply impressed with Church and State.³ Both Maurice and Coleridge drank deep of the same Platonic springs, although Maurice at one point, did not consider Coleridge "a thorough Platonist."⁴ At another time he deplores Coleridge's "tendency to abstraction."⁵ Nevertheless his sympathies were with him. There can be no question as to the soundness of his judgment that Coleridge "besides being a philosopher," "was a penitent."⁶

There are obvious points of contact in the teaching of the two men. There is the emphasis on the will, both in sin and in redemption.⁷ There is the rejection of inadequate commercial theories of the Atonement,⁸ and the emphasis on the reconciliation by God through the Living Word.⁹ And there is the protest against Paley's methods.¹⁰

There is finally, the deep-rooted Christian Socialism of both men. Maurice, like Coleridge, desired to

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1. Maurice: The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice, I, p.65.
 2. Ibid: I. p.177.
 3. Ibid: I. p.178.
 4. Ibid: I. p.251.
 5. Ibid: I. p.510.
 6. Ibid: II. p.194.
 7. Ibid: II. p.479. Cf. Wardrop: loc. cit.
 8. Ibid: II. p.272.
 9. Ibid: op.cit., II. pp.272, 365-368.
 10. Ibid: II. p.450.

see Christianity not only a faith, but a deed.¹ The cure for the evils of society is religion, moral discipline, Christian ethics and faith. Beer finds in Coleridge the fount of Maurice's Christian Socialism.²

(b) Charles Kingsley. (1819-1875)

Kingsley read Coleridge's Aids while at Cambridge in 1841.³ His contact with the Coleridgean stream may, however, be traced to his deep friendship with Maurice. Not as great a theological thinker as his friend, his humanitarian instincts found expression in their joint work for Christian Socialism. In Kingsley, Coleridge's social passion lived on.

(c) Julius Charles Hare. (1795-1855)

Coleridge's influence on Julius Charles Hare, another of the Broad Church School and co-translator with Thirlwall of Niebuhr's History of Rome, is seen in Hare's personal testimony. His Mission of the Comforter (1846) is dedicated to Coleridge. Hare describes himself as "one of the many pupils whom his writings have helpt to discern the sacred concord and unity of human and divine truth."⁴ He found Coleridge's writings "full of seeds." Coleridge's break with the empiricism of the day awake a welcome response in Hare.

These three examples serve to illustrate Coleridge's influence on the men of the succeeding generation.

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1. Beer: History of British Socialism, I. p.272, II. p.180 seq.
Cf. Maurice: The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice, II.p.44.
 2. Beer: op.cit., II. p.180.
 3. Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of his Life, p.17.
 4. Hare: The Mission of the Comforter, dedication.

Through them his thought has been melted into the theology of the nineteenth century and has coloured all subsequent thinking.

In addition to Coleridge's definite influence upon the Broad Church School, his influence was felt in England by three men of totally different stamp.

(d) Edward Irving. (1792-1834.)

There is, in the first place, Coleridge's younger contemporary, Edward Irving, the brilliant, but erratic, Scottish preacher. Coleridge's influence on Edward Irving may be traced to the personal friendship of the two men and the latter's attendance at the Thursday evening "salons" at Highgate. Irving's millenarian emphasis in his later years found little sympathy in Coleridge, but of Coleridge's influence in other aspects there can be no question. Like Hare and Bushnell, Irving pays personal tribute to Coleridge. Addressing Coleridge in a dedicatory epistle, he says,

"You have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation."¹

(e) John Henry Newman. (1801-1890)

Newman's first acquaintance with Coleridge's works came in the spring of 1835. He records his astonishment at certain similarities between his own thought and that of

1. Oliphant: Life of Edward Irving, I. p.205.
Quoted Henderson: The Religious Controversies of Scotland, p.125.

Coleridge. "I am surprised how much I thought mine, is to be found there."¹ What this is, Newman does not tell us here; but in a later note to a sermon on The Influence of Natural and Revealed Religion Respectively, he remarks on certain passages in Coleridge's Biographia Literaria as anticipating certain portions of the sermon.² It is not difficult to discover the point of contact as Newman writes,

"While, then, Natural Religion was not without provision for all the deepest and truest religious feelings, yet presenting no tangible history of the Deity, no points of His personal character (if we may so speak without irreverence), it wanted that most efficient incentive to all action, a starting or rallying point, - an object on which the affections could be placed, and the energies concentrated."³

Newman, with his mind centred on the moral attributes of God, finds in Coleridge the same insistence on the personal character of God.⁴ Newman's reading of Coleridge was not, however, thorough. It seems remarkable that he should class Coleridge with the Socinians.⁵ Wilfrid Ward, the biographer of Newman, has only one reference to Coleridge,⁶ and is silent regarding the influence of Coleridge, and Newman's reading of him.⁷ We may take it that the influence did not extend to a great depth. The course of Newman's later life and thought lay altogether outside the circle of the liberalizing influence of Coleridge.

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1. Letters and Correspondence of J.H.Newman, II. p.39.
 2. Oxford University Sermons, p.23.
 3. Ibid: p.23 - Sermon preached April 13, 1830.
 4. Cf. Biographia Literaria, pp.95, 125 seq.
 5. Letters and Correspondence, II. p.93.
 6. Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman, I. p.49.
 7. Barry, in the Catholic Encyclopaedia, writes that Newman "took some principles from Coleridge, perhaps indirectly." Op.cit., Vol.X. p.800.

Newman recognized in the philosophy of Coleridge a reaction from the "superficial character of the religious teaching" of the preceding age.¹ In 1839, he acknowledged that Coleridge had laid a "philosophical basis" for "Church feelings and opinions." Newman writes,

"While he indulged a liberty of speculation, which no Christian can tolerate, and advocated conclusions which were often heathen rather than Christian, yet after all instilled a higher philosophy into inquiring minds, than they had hitherto been accustomed to accept. In this way he made trial of his age, and succeeded in interesting its genius in the cause of Catholic truth."²

B. Influence in America.

(a) Ralph Waldo Emerson. (1803-1882)

Coleridge's influence on American thought was remarkable. Emerson visited Coleridge at Highgate in 1830. According to Emerson the meeting was "rather a spectacle than a conversation, of no use beyond the satisfaction of my curiosity."³ If this personal visit was of little account, it was otherwise with Emerson's reading of Coleridge. Buckham writes that Emerson and the New England Transcendentalists "were more indebted to Coleridge than to any other modern philosopher."⁴

(b) James Marsh. (1794-1842)

Coleridge was introduced to American readers by James Marsh, President of the University of Vermont. Marsh read the Aids during his early period as president, that is to

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1. Bertram Newman: Cardinal Newman, p.50.
 2. British Critic, April 1839, printed Essays: Critical and Historical, I. pp.268-269. Apologia pro vita sua, p.97.
 3. Emerson: Works, Vol. II. p.9. (York Library edition.)
 4. Buckham: Progressive Religious Thought in America, p.48. Vide Thompson: Emerson's Indebtedness to Coleridge. (Studies in Philology, Vol.XXIII. #1, January 1926.)

say, sometime after 1826. The book, says Buckham, "came to him as the message of a kindred and greater soul speaking from the housetops truths which had been but whisperings to himself."¹ Marsh set himself to place the book before the American public. This took place in 1829 with his edition of the Aids, together with a Preliminary Essay, the writing by which Marsh is best known.² "Unless I distrust my own feelings and convictions altogether," wrote Dr. Marsh, "I must suppose, that for some, I hope for many, minds, it (the Aids) will have a deep and enduring interest."³ Marsh's hope was not without realization. There was much comment and criticism in the religious journals.⁴ In 1839, another edition of the Aids appeared, edited this time by Professor McVikar of Columbia College.⁵ Interest in Coleridge continued to grow. In 1853, the first complete edition of Coleridge's works, edited by Shedd, was published in New York, prior to any such edition in England. In 1847, Noah Porter, Jr. contributed a notable article to The Bibliotheca Sacra dealing with Coleridge and his American disciples.

"The influence of Coleridge on the philosophy and theology of New England," wrote Porter, "has been in some respects,

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1. Buckham: James Marsh and Coleridge. (The Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol.LXI. #ccxlii, April 1904, p.308.) Vide Marjorie Nicolson: James Marsh and the Vermont Transcendentalists. (Philosophical Review, 34, 28-50. 1925.)
 2. Vide Aids, pp.xxiii-lxxvi.
 3. Aids, Preliminary Essay, p.xxiii.
 4. Vide Snyder: American Comments on Coleridge a Century Ago, in Studies by Several Hands etc., pp.201-221.
 5. Vide Snyder: op.cit., pp.215-219 re the controversy between Marsh and McVickar over these rival editions.

what President Marsh desired it should be. It has opened new fields of inquiry, and put us in possession of other modes of viewing religious truth."¹

(c) Horace Bushnell. (1802-1876)

By far the most remarkable example of Coleridge's influence is seen in the case of Horace Bushnell, the great American theologian. The full extent of this influence is realized only by reference to Bushnell himself. Bushnell began the reading of Coleridge during his college days at Yale at a time when his model was Paley. The result of this introduction is given best in his own words:

"By and by it fell to me to begin the reading of Coleridge. For a whole half-year I was buried under his Aids to Reflection, and trying vainly to look up through. I was quite sure that I saw a star glimmer, but I could not quite see the stars. My habit was only landscape before; but now I saw enough to convince me of a whole other world somewhere overhead, a range of realities in higher tier, that I must climb after, and, if possible, apprehend."²

The book stayed by him to the end. Bushnell's criticism of certain books is given to us by J. H. Twickell:- "He mentioned two or three, but finally demolished them all, save Coleridge. I have often heard him say that he was more indebted to Coleridge than to any extra-Scriptural author."³ This remarkable tribute is attested by Bushnell's work. Munger gives the credit to Coleridge for Bushnell's Nature and the Supernatural,⁴

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1. Porter: Coleridge and his American Disciples. (The Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. IV. p.163.)
 2. Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, pp.208-209.
 3. Ibid: p.499.
 4. Munger: Horace Bushnell: Preacher and Theologian, pp.209-210.

which strikes the familiar note of Coleridge that will is creative and above nature. Bushnell's theory of language has its roots deep in Coleridge.¹ Finally, the work of Bushnell on the Christian doctrine of Atonement clearly is indebted to Coleridge. Munger, Bushnell's biographer, gives his judgment regarding the influence of the Aids on Bushnell:- "It may be said that it is to this book we are indebted for Bushnell."²

From all this it can be seen how Coleridge's thought passed by way of Marsh, Bushnell and thence through Washington Gladden into the blood-stream of American theology. "Coleridge," concludes Buckham, "may be said to be the philosopher of the progressive school of theology in America."³ His influence, both in England and in America, may be summed up in words which Stopford Brooke wrote describing F.W. Robertson:- "A living source of Impulse, a practical direction of Thought, a key to many of the problems of Theology, and, above all, a path to Spiritual Freedom."⁴

III. Contribution.

As the pioneer in nineteenth century English theology, Coleridge deserves credit, first, for his attempt to make theology philosophical and to weave from the materials of speculation and Christian faith a garment of truth without seam.

1. Vide "On the Nature of Language as related to Thought and Spirit," in God in Christ, pp.9-117.

2. Munger: op.cit., p.46.

3. Buckham: Progressive Religious Thought in America, pp.48-49.

4. Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson, preface to first edition, Vol.I, p.xxiv. 1878 edition.

"Coleridge," writes Archdeacon Storr, "made Christianity live, not only as a perfect way of life, but as the perfect truth, the supreme and satisfying philosophy. He vitalised the dead bones of religion, and made theology once more a living and progressive science."¹

Thus Coleridge may be said to stand in the succession of Origen and Aquinas. Second, as a Christian apologist, Coleridge was filled with a sense of the breadth and universality of Christianity. It was the crown of religion. It bore within itself the witness to its truth. "In order to an efficient belief in Christianity, a man must have been a Christian," Coleridge wrote at the close of the Biographia Literaria.² There is no mistaking what he means. He shifted the apologetic emphasis from the external to the internal, from "proof" to "experience." In this, as Stewart remarks, he had "the eye of a seer for the new direction which apologetic in the nineteenth century must take."³ His treatment of the inspiration of the Scriptures is the finest instance of his work in this field.

Coleridge's fine sense of religious reality is seen clearly in his epistemology, where the organ of knowledge is the total man; and in his predication of personality of God. Sin and redemption become realities in his hands. Man does not, however, dwell in solitary communion with God. He lives among his fellow-men. Coleridge did not hold simply a pure theory of God. His theory involved practice. To this

1. Storr: op.cit., p.331.

2. Biographia Literaria, p.300.

3. Stewart: The Place of Coleridge in English Theology.
(Harvard Theological Review, Vol. XI.#1. January 1918.)

may be traced his pioneering work for socialism. Beer finds in the Lay Sermon of 1817, "the first voice of Christian Socialism."¹ To it may also be traced his work for the Church. Coleridge bade the Church believe in herself and stand for her spiritual independency.

Steeped in the Platonic realism he shows a tendency to speak of principles rather than of persons in his treatment of Christianity. It may be said that his theology is "Logocentric" rather than Christocentric. To note this, however, is only to emphasize the double strain of his thought and to illustrate once more how he spent himself in seeking unity,—a unity that would build all knowledge into one temple of truth.

Lamb's "Logician, Metaphysician, Bard" has a place secure in the history of nineteenth century thought. From this review of Coleridge's religious philosophy, it is clear that his work, long recognized as of value in determining a new standpoint, was in fact more systematized and nearer completion than has been realized. It becomes evident that his place is a larger one than has hitherto been assigned. That the eighteenth century technique and ideas were inadequate to meet the problems of the new age is clear enough now. To Coleridge, however, belongs the credit of being the first to realize the demands of the new situation, and to attempt to meet them by a positive philosophy. This philosophy, comprehensive

1. Beer: op.cit., I. p.137.

in its aim and vital at its core, was the spiritual realism which has been reviewed. Man is a unity and a spiritual being. He reaches his highest level and reveals his true nature in fellowship with God.

Appendix A.Prospectus of Coleridge's Bristol Lecture Course, 1795.¹

Six Lectures will be given by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, on Revealed Religion, its Corruption, and its Political Views.

These Lectures are intended for two classes of men, Christians and Infidels; to the Former, that they may be able to give a Reason for the hope that is in them: to the latter, that they may not determine against Christianity, from arguments applicable to its corruptions only.

The subjects of the FIRST LECTURE, are:-

The Origin of Evil. The Necessity of Revelation deduced from the Nature of Man. An Examination and Defence of the Mosaic Dispensation.

SECOND LECTURE.

The Sects of Philosophy, and the Popular Superstitions of the Gentile World, from the earliest times to the Birth of Christ.

THIRD LECTURE.

Concerning the Time of the Appearance of Christ. The Internal Evidence of Christianity. The External Evidences of Christianity.

FOURTH LECTURE.

The External Evidences of Christianity continued. Answers to Popular and Philosophical objections.

FIFTH LECTURE.

The Corruptions of Christianity, in Doctrine. Political Application.

SIXTH LECTURE.

The grand Political Views of Christianity - far beyond other Religions, and even Sects of Philosophy. The Friend of Civil Freedom. The probable state of Society and Governments, if all men were Christians.

Tickets to be had of Mr. Cottle, Bookseller.

¹ Cottle: Early Recollections. pp. 27-28. -----

Appendix B.

"It is a fact, that there are certain doctrines, commandments, precepts and narratives, which collectively are received as true and of divine authority, by the Greek, Roman, Anglican, Evangelical, and Reformed Churches These doctrines &c, as common to all Christians, constitute collectively the Christian Religion, the following being the sum:- That there is one only God who is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as the Creator, so the Preserver and Governor of the Universe; - that Man fallen 'quam longissime' from the original rectitude has become corrupt in his own nature, and yet so as to remain a responsible being; - that for the redemption and restoration of fallen Man, God was manifest in the flesh, the Eternal Son, very God of very God, and One with the Father, uniting the human with his divine nature and submitting to the death of the Cross; - that he rose from the grave, and became our Redeemer, Mediator and Judge; - that previous to this manifestation of God in the flesh (the so-called Incarnation) there were preparatory dispensations as parts of the same great process, namely, the patriarchal, the Mosaic and the prophetic; - and lastly, that this same process is still carrying on by reading and hearing of certain scriptures, by the aids of the Holy Spirit, by the general dispositions of Providence, and by the continued intercession of the Redeemer, through whom there is forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for as many as receive the Lord Jesus in Love and Faith, manifesting both by obedience to his commandments."¹

1. MS.B. Supplementary.

Appendix C.

A fragmentary note in the British Museum bearing the heading, "God," is of interest. (British Museum MS., Egerton 2801. ff.115-119. Watermark 1817.) Coleridge notes:-

1. An impulse quasi a tergo discoverable in early childhood—a darkness felt in the day-light but the tendency instantly forced into a false direction, scared by authority, then grounded in a bodily sensation, in a reality indeed, but a reality *ἐκ προτέρων* by association; (as with the voice and touch and countenance of the Mother &c) and finally Custom presses with a weight heavy as ?
2. Hence positiveness for certainty—anger kindled by opposition, but early perplexity left behind. The Man asks support of the Notion identified as with his blood in childhood—.
3. Shall he begin with sense? The African's Fetisch and the Brahman's Pantheism. (See Bhagavat-geeta, p.90-93.)
4. The understanding—Paley's Natural Theology as the Wart of conscience—Berkeley's Minuta Philosopher the finest—but sophisms both.
5. The reason—necessary existence—ontological proof. Kant.
6. The Judgment, as the understanding substrated by the Reason.
7. The conscience—as evidence of free-will—incompatible with the non-existence of God—but this is rather a proof that God is presupposed in the Conscience,—and therefore purely subjective,—besides, will it answer regressively as well as it seems to do usque ad Deum?
8. The Idea—Cartesian,* Mendelssohn's.
9. Review of the Whole—Is the craving satisfied? If so, there is no Philosophy. The science of Theology suffices. If not, which is the residuum of Darkness, then final defection? For here must be the commencement of Philosophy—Is the World? Is God? Is the affirmation of the second Question an answer to the First? For these Questions answered adequately, all others meet the solutions in the several Sciences. This proved to be the original tendency from which the child is forced.

*In Blackwood's Magazine, October, 1821. Coleridge rejects this argument on the ground that "existence is no idea but a fact, no property of a thing but its reality itself."

Appendix D.Additional Material re Coleridge's Doctrine of the Trinity.

MS.C, p.26: "Brief Exposition of the Trinity in Unity, or of the Tri-unity."

1. In discoursing of the eternal Verities it is indifferent whether we name the second Distinctity in the Godhead Reason, or Being: for the Logos is the Identity of Knowing and Being.

Will, Reason, Act, in the form of the Absolute Will self-affirmed = the I AM, the Father.

Will, Reason, Act in the form of Reason, living and substantial = the Son.

Will, Reason, and Act in the form of Act, vivificare et ipse vivens = Holy Ghost.

And these three Absolute Forms by the Eternal Presupposition of the immanifestible Identity are the Absolutely One God.

2. Coleridge's favourite formula for the Trinity is found frequently throughout his notes. One form is found in the Semina Rerum and is as follows:-(MS.C, p.162) Cf. Notes Theological, Political & Miscellaneous, pp.395-396.

Identity.

The Absolute Will, the Good.

Ipsēity

The I AM.
the Father.
the Supreme Will.

Alterity.

Being, Truth, the
Supreme Mind, the
only-begotten Word.

Community.

Life, Love, the Holy Spirit.

Another form is also suggested:- MS.C, p.163.

Prothesis.

The Absolute Subjectivity = the Absolute Will,
the one only Absolute Good.

Thesis.

The relatively Subjective
The Eternal I AM
the Father, the
Supreme Will.

Antithesis.

The relatively Objective,
the Supreme Being, ὁ Θεὸς ἐν
τῷ κελπῷ τὸ πατρὸς
the Supreme Reason, the only
begotten Word, ἡ ὁλὴ πατρὸς
pleroma et unitas Idearum.

Synthesis.

The relatively subjective-Objective; Subjective in relation to the relatively Objective, objective in relation to the relatively Subjective—the Holy Spirit, Life, Love, Wisdom.

Appendix D. (continued)

3. CF. MS.C, p.116.

"Wonderful even to myself is the pregnancy of the Ideas respecting the Absolute, and the three Forms in each of which it exists integrally yet in all onely (wunly) Father, Son, Spirit = Ipseity, Alterity, Community = εἰς, λόγος, εἰς = the Supreme Will, the Supreme Reason, the Supreme Life."

Appendix E.The Christian Church.

It is possible to amplify Coleridge's doctrine of the Christian Church from certain marginal notes and ex officio comments. Coleridge's bi-polar mind conceived the Christian Church under two forms: the idea and the historical community. "I contend," he writes in a note on Jeremy Taylor, "that the Church in the Christian sense is an idea;—not therefore a chimera, or a fancy, but a real being, and a most powerful reality."¹ This is Coleridge's ideal Church, "the members of which are recorded only in the book of life at any one moment."² On the other hand, this idea needs historical expression. The idea works itself out historically in the Christian community. A note in the Semina Rerum makes this clear.³

"But tho' History of Christians, which cannot be rendered intelligible without the History of Men in general History, be the proper real exponent of the Christian Idea, still a focus is wanting, to collect the scattered rays of a Multitude of individual Subjects, and above all to present their Unity, and as the Objective Form of the Idea, in which as permanent in all succession and entire in each and every Individual, this Unity is grounded. Such is the Church: and as the History of Christians requires the light of general History, so neither can the Church be understood aright without reference to the Christendom, during each of it's periods."

1. Notes on English Divines, 1, p.225.

2. Ibid, 1, p.226.

3. MS.C, p.45.

The famous "Pentad of Operative Christianity" combines these two conceptions. The Church takes her place in the scheme over against the Scriptures as antithesis to thesis, both based on Christ the Word and illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Their synthesis is the Preacher, who is the "sensible voice of the Holy Spirit."¹ In this sense, there is a "co-ordinateness" of the Church and the written Word.² This, Coleridge admits, is high churchism.³ It is not, however, a high churchism based on an appeal to creeds, orders, ritual and sacraments.

Although towards the close of his life, Coleridge was ready enough to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles,⁴ yet for creeds, as such, he had little use. "The full-grown Christian needs no other Creed than the Scriptures themselves."⁵ He was quite prepared to criticize the Apostles' Creed⁶ and the Nicene Creed,⁷ and to reject the Athanasian Creed as superfluous and unauthentic.⁸

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1. Notes on English Divines, I, p.66. Cf. ibid, I, p.334. Cf. Aids, p.288.
 2. Ibid, I. p.66.
 3. Ibid, I. p.66.
 4. Notes on the Book of Common Prayer, Aids, p.359.
 5. Notes on English Divines, II. p.151.
 6. Ibid, II. pp.73, 104; Omniana, p.422.
 7. Ibid, II. pp.151, 154, 212.
 8. Ibid, II. p.150.

Again, although a devout Anglican and a professed lover of the Church of England,¹ Coleridge did not hold that episcopacy is of the esse of the Church. Even granting the establishment of Bishops by St. Paul—a moot question in view of the New Testament usage of presbyter and episcopos—"yet was this done jure Apostolico for the universal Church in all places and ages; or only as expedient for that time and under those circumstances?"² Confirmation by a bishop is neither a scriptural necessity, nor of apostolic origin.³ Bishops are not requisite for the reception of the Spirit.⁴ Episcopacy can be understood historically, without rash statements being made in its support.

"Nothing more rational or indeed inevitable," he writes in a manuscript fragment, "than the commencement and continuance of Superintendents or Bishops, in the Christian Churches from the Apostolic Age—For who would not have their Founder in the Chair?"⁵

The Church does not mean the clergy exclusively.⁶ Priests are not necessary for salvation.⁷ In fact, "the Gospel has no Priests, can have no Priests."⁸ Nor is any particular church necessary for salvation. Coleridge stresses this with

1. Table Talk, p.67.

2. Notes on English Divines, I. p.172.

3. Ibid, I. p.322.

4. Ibid, I. p.327.

5. British Museum Copy, Egerton 2801, folio 255.

6. Notes on English Divines, I. p.325.

7. Ibid, II. p.4.

8. Note on p.11 of Blomfield: A Charge delivered to the Clergy of his Diocese. British Museum Copy.

characteristic hyperbole. "I know of no church," he writes, "Jewish, Turkish or Brahman, in which, and in spite of which, a man may not possibly be saved. Who dares limit the Spirit of God."¹ The position, it must be noted, is a negative one.

Ritual to Coleridge is a circumstantial, not an essential.² It is an aid to decency and dignity in worship.³ The liturgy is "a grand composition of devotional music,"⁴ expressing the natural language of the feelings.⁵

The question of the constitution and discipline of the Christian Church gave him some concern. In a note in Southey's Life of Wesley, he writes,

"The constitution of a Christian Church I have found a problem of exceeding difficulty,—increased by the difficulty of satisfactorily determining the period to which our Lord's few declarations on this head refer... and second, by certain perplexities respecting the Paulinity of the Epistles to Timothy and Titus."⁶

Elsewhere, he feels that Christ's words with regard to the Church apply "wholly to the Synagogue or church then existing."⁷ He agrees with Baxter "as to the necessity of Church discipline in a Christian Church."⁸ The passage in the Aids is emphatic in its declaration that the Church must exercise authority;

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1. Southey: Life of Wesley, II. p.95n.
 2. Notes on English Divines, II. p.20. Cf. *ibid.* I, p.123.
 3. *Ibid.*, II. pp.17-19.
 4. *Ibid.*, II. p.27.
 5. *Ibid.*, I. pp.92-93.
 6. Southey: Life of Wesley, I. p.154n.
 7. Notes on English Divines, I. p.176. Cf. *ibid.*, II. p.98.
 8. *Ibid.*, II. p.6.

"My fixed principle is: that a Christianity without a Church exercising Spiritual Authority is Vanity and Dissolution."¹ Authority—it is to be noted—is qualified by spiritual.

Coleridge is clear as to the authority. He is not quite so clear as to the meaning of spiritual in this connection. The power of a bishop is spiritual only.² Discipline in religious matters cannot be entrusted to magistrates for the same reason.³ He approves of the Presbyterian system of lay elders as "constituting a medium and conducting link between the priest and the congregation, so that all may be one well-organized body spiritual without discontinuity."⁴

The authority of the Church is qualified by that of the Scriptures. "The Church on earth can in no sense be such in and through itself, that is, its component parts, but only by their common adherence to the body of truth made present in the Scripture."⁵ The condition of membership is also spiritual. It is faith, with its "proper and primary seat in the moral will."⁶ Excommunication is thus "merely declarative" of a state already existing.⁷ Discipline must be in keeping with the fact that the flock, whether of

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1. Aids, p.200n.
 2. Notes on English Divines, I. pp.171-172.
 3. Ibid, II. pp.13, 19, 59.
 4. Ibid, II. p.10.
 5. Notes on English Divines, I. P.62.
 6. Ibid, I. p.62.
 7. Ibid, I. p.63.

Presbyter or Bishop, is composed of men and not of sheep, "not of a natural, generic, or even constant inferiority of judgment; but Christians, co-heirs of the promises, and therein of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and of the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures." "How then," he asks, "can they be excluded from a share in Church Government."¹ Discipline must not sink into "mere club-regulations."² Christian discipline is a spiritual matter. It is discipline "enforced only by spiritual motives, enacted by spiritual authority, and submitted to for conscience' sake."³ He claims that though Church government is an ordinary thing in some form or other, "it does not follow that one particular form is an ordinary thing."⁴

Several late entries in the Table Talk indicate that Coleridge's mind was working towards the idea of a "spiritual" democracy with regard to the government of the Christian Church. On May 18th, 1830, he is reported as saying, "A democracy, according to the prescript of pure reason, would, in fact, be a church. There would be focal points in it, but no superior."⁵ A little later in the same year, discoursing on Church and State, he holds, "A church is, therefore, in idea the only pure democracy."⁶ From December of the following year comes a third note. A church is "the only pure

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1. Notes on English Divines, II. p.98.
 2. Ibid; II. p.99.
 3. Ibid: II. p.229.
 4. Ibid: II. p.59.
 5. Table Talk, p.78.
 6. Ibid, p.107.

democracy, because in it persons are alone considered, and one person a priori is equal to another person." He adds that even to a church, discipline is an essential condition.¹ Coleridge finds in Quaker discipline something akin to what he has in mind.²

The conflict between this stress on the spiritual and his love of the Established Church was apparent to Coleridge. "There are few subjects," he writes, "that need more investigation, yet require more vigour and soundness of judgment to be rightly handled, than this of Christian discipline in a Church established by law."³ Again he notes,

"The impossibility of Christian discipline with a Church established by Law, and all the permitted acts of which have the force of penal or compulsory Laws, has always appeared to me the objection that bears hardest on Church Establishment."⁴

And again, in 1829, he asks, "Is a national Church, established by law, compatible with Christianity?"⁵ Coleridge claims that it was this matter that led him first to his distinction between the ecclesia and the enclesia.⁶ In an essay on "Establishment and Dissent,"—not now, if ever, extant—Coleridge claims to have met the difficulty by pointing to the fact of the discipline of the Church of Scotland. Punishment in this case is ignominy; the enforcing magistrate, the clergy. He is not clear whether this would be either wise or

1. Table Talk, p.147.

2. Notes on English Divines, II. p.100.

3. Ibid, II. p.228.

4. Ibid, II. p.20.

5. Ibid, II. p.99.

6. Notes on English Divines, II. p.228.

expedient in England.¹ But the matter was never clarified further and Coleridge takes refuge from his difficulties in the distinction between the ecclesis and the enclesia, between the Christian and the National Church.

Nor does Coleridge's view of the Christian Church rest upon any particular theory of the sacraments. He had certain well-defined convictions with regard to the nature of the sacraments. During his Unitarian days, the sacraments had little place in his life.

"I cannot as yet reconcile my intellect to the sacramental Rites;.....I never even state my dissent..... I omit the rites, and wish to say nothing about it;I cannot, I must not, play the hypocrite. If I performed or received the Lord's Supper, in my present state of mind, I should indeed be eating and drinking condemnation."²

Coleridge's sincerity in this conviction is attested by the fact that none of his children were baptized at birth. It was not until November 1803, when Coleridge had returned to the orthodox faith, that Hartley, Derwent and Sara were baptized.³

Coming to his later thought, it is clear that his view of the nature of the sacraments depends on the meaning which he assigns to symbols. As defined in the Statesman's Manual, a symbol differs both from a metaphor and an allegory.

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1. Notes on English Divines, II. p.229.
 2. Unpublished Letters, I. p.79. - Letter of July, 1797.
 3. Ibid, I. p.155n.

inasmuch as it is "an actual and essential part of that, the whole of which it represents."¹ To Coleridge the sacraments are symbols. A long entry in the Semina Rerum makes this clear.²

"A Sacrament is a Symbol or Mystery consisting of a sensible sign and a spiritual substantiative (sic) Act, the predicate spiritual distinguishing the act from a physical, and even from a moral act, unless in the latter case the act of the soul shall be correlative to an act of the Divine Spirit, and the medium thro' which the gracious influence of the Divine Spirit is conveyed to the Believer—while the Act, and the substantiative Act, is in distinction from a doctrine or office, or an event, however awful and important."

On the basis of this definition, Coleridge excludes penance, ordination and marriage from the list of sacraments.³ The definition also goes beyond the Zwinglian view of the Lord's Supper as exclusively a signum commemorans.⁴ Coleridge does not elaborate what he means by the "spiritual substantiative act." However, from his definition of a symbol, his position is clear. In the sacraments, God actually does something. In other words, he construes the sacraments in a genuinely religious sense. This is emphasized further in the same note in the distinction drawn between a sacrament and a ceremony. Every sacrament is a ceremony, but

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1. Statesman's Manual, Biog. Lit. p.348. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.80.
 2. MS.C, p.71. Cf. Notes Theological, Political and Miscellaneous, p.84.
 3. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.307.
 4. Cf. Table Talk, p.79.

every ceremony is not necessarily a sacrament. The ceremonial part of the sacrament has several distinct purposes, "one outward, another inward, one general and public, another personal."¹ Again, the outward purpose may be divided into a public purpose "in relation to a more distant" circle, and a "special and household purpose in relation to a close circle." In both divisions the outward purpose is effected by the ceremonial part of the sacrament alone; the ceremony being the means to the end. Abstracted from the spiritual act, the sensible sign is a ceremony. The substantiative act is hidden and "confined to the Soul of the individual Agent and Patient."² The Eucharist is the epiphany for as many as receive it in faith.³

There is a long passage in the Aids dealing with the question of Infant Baptism.⁴ Here Coleridge rightly rejects any argument drawn from the silence of the New Testament.⁵ Baptism is not essential for salvation, and is therefore not to be enjoined as an article of faith.⁶ The Church, however, exercised a sound discretion in baptizing infants.⁷

1. MS. C, p.71.

2. Ibid, p.71.

3. Notes on English Divines, I. p.79. Cf. Table Talk, pp.79,272.

4. Aids, pp.243-257.

5. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.10.

6. Cf. ibid, I. p.237.

7. Cf. ibid, I. p.24.

In the first place, it made publicly manifest those individuals who were to be regarded by the world as belonging to the Christian community. Secondly, it marked out for the Church itself those who were entitled to especial care. Distinguishing between the outward and the inward purposes, Coleridge holds that the Church continued to affix the outward sign where the effect was to be produced on the consciousness of others.

"while to the substantial and spiritual purpose, where the effect was to be produced on the individual's own mind, she gave its befitting dignity by an ordinance not figurative, but standing in the direct cause and relation of means to the end."¹

For a period, he admits, he had felt that baptism should be reserved until confirmation, but feels that such a position is not sufficient to warrant schism.² It is impossible to state what precise spiritual efficacy Coleridge actually ascribed to Infant Baptism. His ethical realism held him to a belief that "spiritual influences suppose capability."³ There is a passage in the Aids that hints at a belief in some sense in prevenient grace in connection with Infant Baptism.⁴

1. Aids, p.252.

2. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.234; II. pp.11, 48.

3. Ibid, I. p.241. Cf. ibid, II. p.30.

4. Aids, p.251. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.329.

"What more expressive of the true character of that originant yet generic stain, from which the Son of God, by his mysterious incarnation and agony and death and resurrection, and by the Baptism of the Spirit, came to cleanse the children of Adam, than the exhibition of the outward element to infants free from and incapable of crime, in whom the evil principle was present only as potential being, and whose outward semblance represented the Kingdom of Heaven?"

After his Unitarian days, Coleridge was ready enough to appear as sponsor for the children of his friends.¹ The assertion of regeneration in the Baptismal Service he holds to be symbolical and prospective.²

The Lord's Supper was of more interest to Coleridge, both intellectually and devotionally. It was the "sacrament of love and life,"³ the "symbol of all our religion."⁴ The devotional notes on preparation for the sacrament advocate the reading of the Gospel of St. John, "with a kneeling and praying heart," as the surest antidote to the "lethargizing hemlock" of the merely commemorative view.⁵ The Eucharist is a symbol and representative instance of an act of assimilative faith in which "Christ is our spiritual food and substance."⁶

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1. Letters, II. pp.775-776.
 2. Memorials of Coleorton, Vol. II. p.248. March 18, 1826.
 3. Table Talk, p.272.
 4. Ibid, P.79.
 5. Notes on Book of Common Prayer, Aids, p.350.
 6. Ibid, p.353.

Coleridge holds that controversy respecting the Eucharist may be traced to a confusion of corporeal and spiritual, of phaenomenon and noumenon. A manuscript fragment reveals his mind on this point.

"This contra-distinction of corporeal from spiritual is the leaven of error that pervades the whole controversy respecting the Eucharist, and is partaken of by Romanist, Calvinist and Lutheran. If instead of corporeal they had substituted the word, phenomenal or corpus phaenomenon, in antithesis to corpus noumenon or reale, how many sanguinary conflicts would have been prevented, and how different a judgment would Philosophers have passed on the mystery itself."¹

A marginal note elsewhere expresses the same judgment,

"The nature of the contrary errors respecting the Eucharist seem to me abundantly clear. - First, and Common to both Parties, the confusion of the Phaenomenon with the Noumenon or thing in itself; 2. The substituting a select Symbol.....to the exclusion of the universal Verity symbolized. (Romish Plethora) 3. The De-substantiation of the mysterious Symbol into a grotesque hollow Metaphor (Arminian Marasmus, or Sacramentarian Atrophy).²

Thus Coleridge feels that much of the controversy over transubstantiation and consubstantiation is beside the point.³

Church Union.

Coming to the final proposal of the 1828 sketch—the exhortation to the Clergy and a solemn Appeal to the (Orthodox) Dissenters—it is evident that already

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1. British Museum Manuscript. Egerton 2801, folio 263.
 2. Note in Blanco White: Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism, pp.234-235. London, 1825. British Museum Copy. Printed by Taylor: Critical Annotations by S.T.Coleridge, p.26. Cf. Notes on English Divines, I. p.289.
 3. Notes on English Divines, I. p.319; II. p.74. Cf. ibid, I. pp.52, 54, 282, 284.

Coleridge had given expression to this proposal. In the Aids of 1825, his concluding Aphorism on Spiritual Religion ends with a quotation to which Coleridge heartily gives his assent.

"That all Christians in the world that hold the same fundamentals ought to make one Church, though differing in lesser opinions; and that the sin, the mischief, and danger to the souls of men, that divide into those many sects and parties among us, does (for the most of them) consist not so much in the opinions of themselves, as in their dividing and separating for them."¹

A note of April 1, 1826, in the Semina Rerum indicates Coleridge's large-visioned scheme. It is in the nature of a personal memorandum and reads,

"Mem. To conclude the Essay or Dialogue on the Church with an earnest expostulation and Scheme of Union between our Establishment and the really pious and orthodox Dissenters who have the interests of our common Christianity more at heart than the "Dissenting Interest".²

But the note, which commences in so promising a vein, ends in a semi-historical, semi-philosophical discussion of the origin of the various churches. The scheme of union remains among the Coleridgean proposals, never carried to completion, but prophetic of a later day.

1. Aids, p.256.
2. MS.C, p.68.

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N.B. In view of the fact that Dr. Muirhead has omitted part of the title given to the notebook by Coleridge, in his description of the MS. in Coleridge as Philosopher, (p.270), the exact words of Coleridge are given below:-

November, 1825.

Semina Rerum

viz.

Crudezze, Molecula, Nuclei, Visa,
Audita, Cogitata, Cogitanda, of a Man of
Letters friendless, because of No Faction:-
repeatedly and in strong language inculcated
of hiding his light under a Bushel, yet destined
to see publication after publication;
abused by the Edinburgh Review as the
Representative of one Party, and not even
noticed by the Quarterly Review, as the
Representative of the other - and to receive
as the meed of his Labors for the Cause of
Freedom against Despotry and Jacobinism;
of the Church against Infidelity and
Schism; and of Principle against Fashion
and Sciolism; Slander, Loss, and Embarrassment.

On page 149, Coleridge calls the book,

Flycatcher

or

Daybook for impounding Stray Thoughts.
No.XIX.

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